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Natural calamities: 'What State got was a fraction of total losses'

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

Centre covered 6% and 8% of Karnataka's losses due to floods and droughts, respectively, between 2008 and 2024: World Bank

Between 2008 and 2024, funding from the Union government, primarily through the National Disaster Response Fund, covered only a fraction of the total estimated losses – just 8% for droughts and 6% for floods.

This has left the State heavily dependent on limited resources, observed the Environment and Social Systems Assessment report by the World Bank, for the proposed loan for the Karnataka Water Security and Resilience Programme.

"Currently, the only pre-allocated financial support available to States is the State Disaster Risk Management Fund, which has been allocated approximately ₹4,100 crore for the 2021-2026 period under the 15th Finance Commission. However, a large portion of these funds was utilised to manage floods in 2021 and 2022, as well as the drought in 2023," the report further said.

Massive financial losses

The assessment report further observed that over the years, the State has suffered massive financial losses owing to recurring floods and droughts, with annual damage exceeding ₹10,000 crore in the affected years.

In some instances, losses have surged to nearly ₹33,000 crore.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 2

Crowd surge and confusion over trains led to stampede: Railways

18 deaths confirmed; announcement of special train led to a sudden surge from one platform to another; nearly 2,600 additional tickets for unreserved seats were sold on Saturday evening; passenger rush exceeded capacity of platforms

Samridhi Tewari
Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

The stampede that led to the death of 18 people at the New Delhi Railway Station on Saturday night was caused by confusion over two trains headed to Prayagraj, an express and a special train meant for Maha Kumbh pilgrims, according to a preliminary investigation by Indian Railways.

The announcement for the special train led to a mass surge of confused passengers rushing from one platform to another, causing the stampede, officials said.

The preliminary investigation found that the stampede occurred soon after 9.15 p.m., as Platform 14 swelled with crowds awaiting the Prayagraj Express, slated to arrive at 10.10 p.m. Sources said approximately 2,600 additional tickets for unreserved seats had been sold on Saturday evening, in comparison to the usual number, adding that the crowds exceeded the capacity of platforms. At this point, the loudspeakers announced the arrival of the Prayagraj-bound Subedaarganj Special, meant for Kumbh devotees, on Platform 12. Confused passengers thought that it was the Prayagraj Express that had been shifted to Platform 12, prompting a sudden surge.

Tragic end: Relatives of a victim of the stampede mourn her death in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

High-level panel to investigate stampede

NEW DELHI
A two-member high-level administrative grade committee has been formed by the Railways to investigate the stampede at New Delhi Railway Station, officials in the Ministry of Railways said on Sunday. » PAGE 13

Review meeting on safety 'kept officials busy'

CHENNAI
Top railway officials were busy in a meeting on Saturday discussing safety aspects while crowd started swelling at the New Delhi Railway Station, sources said. » PAGE 13

NEARBY

61 railway stations in State to be redeveloped

BENGALURU
Railways has identified 61 railway stations in Karnataka for redevelopment under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, aiming to modernise and upgrade infrastructure at these stations. » PAGE 3

Stop 'misusing' Siddaramaiah's name: DKS

BENGALURU
Urging Congress leaders to stop "misusing" the name of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has said that there is no doubt about Mr. Siddaramaiah being the leader of the Congress. » PAGE 6

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 4

Third U.S. aircraft lands in Amritsar with over 100 Indian deportees

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

A third United States aircraft carrying nearly 112 undocumented Indian migrants landed at the Amritsar International Airport on Sunday night.

According to officials, 31 of the deportees were from Punjab, 44 from Haryana, 33 from Gujarat, two from Uttar Pradesh and one each from Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

The second batch of 116 deportees who landed in Amritsar on Saturday night on a U.S. military C-17 aircraft said they were handcuffed and chained during the flight.

"We were handcuffed and our legs were chained," Daljit Singh from Kurala Kalan village in Hoshiarpur district, said in Hoshiarpur on Sunday.

Sources said women were not shackled, unlike on the first deportation flight on February 5.

Back home: The police escort U.S. deportees at the Ahmedabad airport on Sunday. They had landed in Amritsar a day earlier. PTI

The deportations follow U.S. President Donald Trump's crackdown on illegal immigrants.

The first plane brought 104 illegal migrants in handcuffs and chains to Amritsar, inviting sharp criticism, with the Opposition questioning the Union government why they had been "deported in shackles".

On Saturday night, after immigration and background checks, the deportees from Punjab were taken to their homes in police vehicles.

Two arrested

The Punjab Police arrested two young deportees, Sandeep Singh and Pradeep Singh, who hail from Rajpura in Patiala district, in connection with a murder case of 2023, Patiala's Senior Superintendent of Police Nanak Singh said.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Suspected KNA cadres among 11 militants held in Manipur

Press Trust of India
IMPHAL

Security forces have also dismantled 'illegal check posts' put in place by 'village volunteers'

Security forces have arrested 11 militants from Manipur in the past two days, including seven suspected cadres of the Kuki National Army (KNA), along with arms and ammunition, the police said on Sunday.

The "KNA cadres" were apprehended from the old Khaukual area in Churachandpur district on Friday, they said.

The KNA is a signatory to a Suspension of Operations (SoO) pact signed in 2008 among the United Peoples' Front (UPF) and the Kuki National Organisation (KNO), an umbrella of 24 insurgent groups, the Union Home Ministry, and the Manipur government.

The Manipur government, however, withdrew from the pact in March 2023.

In another operation on Saturday at Huikap village in Imphal East district, four active members of the proscribed outfit Kangleipak Communist Party (PWG group), including two women, were arrested, the police said.

Two AK-47 rifles, pistols, live ammunition, incriminating documents and booklets were among items recovered from their possession, they added.

Check posts cleared

Security forces have also dismantled "illegal check posts" put in place by "village volunteers" in Manipur along the Imphal-Churachandpur road, the police said. "Joint security forces dismantled volunteer check posts at Kaprang and S Kwatlian in Churachandpur District on NH-2... Security forces have taken over these locations and free movement of common vehicles is being ensured," a police officer said.

KUKI-ZO MLAs SEEK PEACE » PAGE 12

Gowda's remarks invite sharp reaction

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda's suggestion that all the three major political parties should bury their differences to fight for Karnataka's share of waters from the Godavari river basin, evoked a sharp reaction from the Congress on Sunday, with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah saying that he had become a cheerleader of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Chief Minister promised to stand with him if he took up a fight now to protect Karnataka's interests.

FULL REPORT » PAGE 6

Perfume balls — the occupational hazard that Shreyas conquered

Though he played second fiddle to his captain in the Cuttack ODI, the batter convinced himself that he can tackle the short ball that has been his nemesis; the Mumbaikar would hope the purple patch carries into the Champions Trophy

R. Kaushik

Mark Wood is quick. Frightfully so, especially if one is less than 22 yards away, no matter how accomplished and gifted the said individual might be. The England pacer usually warms up with a 145 kmph delivery and when he hits peak rhythm, he can threaten 155. Not just threaten, too.

To Wood, a batter with the reputation of being vulnerable to the short ball - hey, who isn't, actually? - is like flashing a red rag before a bull. Shreyas Iyer carries that reputation, though whether it is justified or exaggerated is open to debate.

A full house at Cuttack's Barabati Stadium had already had its fill with popular skipper Rohit Sharma shedding a run of low scores with a breathtaking 32nd One-Day International century. Anything else that transpired that Sunday night would be a mere footnote, including India surging to another series victory at home. Everyone at the ground knew it, but they still had to play their parts, right?

And so Wood charges in, India on 201 for two after 28 overs, just 104 away from taking an unbeatable 2-0 lead. Not the tallest of men, Wood makes up with effort and searing pace what he lacks in height. In front of him, Shreyas, on a measured 14 off 23. First, a full, seam-up ball that the Mumbaikar - the other Mumbaikar - lashes over widish mid-on. Now, Wood sees red. No fast bowler worth his salt likes being creamed aerially down the straight field. Off he goes, arms pumping, blood pounding, heart thudding, to unleash a furious bouncer.

Batting is part instinct, part reaction. It has to be, when one has a fraction of a second after spotting the ball leaving the bowler's hand to decide what to do with the ball in question. Shreyas was convinced in his head that this would be a bouncer, a response to what had happened off the previous delivery. He hung back in his crease, anticipating the short ball, and Wood obliged. In perfect position, he battered it over mid-wicket, in total control. Wood watched open-mouthed as the ball thudded into the boundary boards.

The *piece de resistance* was yet to come. The last ball of the over was again rapid, at a good height (from the bowler's perspective). Again, Shreyas' anticipatory instincts were on point. Hang back, meet the ball at the top of its bounce and unleash the hook which sailed over deep backward square-leg. As the ball scattered the spectators in the stands, the batter allowed himself a punch of the air. The short-ball demon slayed, at least for the time being.

K.R. DEEPAK

THE GIST

- Shreyas isn't entirely at home when the ball is hurled at his chest, at his ribcage. He has been out to the short ball more often than he would like, including in the Buchi Babu tournament in Chennai last year, but that's an occupational hazard
- Shreyas' punch of the air suggested a victory over himself, a victory of the strength of his mind. It was a visceral reaction, not aggressive or 'I've shown you', just an acknowledgement to himself that for all the 'outside noise'
- Behind Rohit, Gill and Kohli, and ahead of Rahul, Axar, Hardik and Jadeja, he looms as the dangerously unpredictable entity

Master against spin

Word travels fast in professional sport, and word has been travelling for a while now that Shreyas Iyer, a master against spin, isn't entirely at home when the ball is hurled at his chest, at his ribcage. He has been out to the short ball more often than he would like, including in the Buchi Babu tournament in Chennai last year, but that's an occupational hazard, he will insist. Different batters adopt different approaches against the bouncer. Some get under it or sway out of the way. Others try to access untenanted parts of the ground, targeting the ramp or the upper cut. And then there are those who take it on, confident in their ability to play the pull and the hook with authority.

Common-sense dictates that there can't be one template. Ideally, the response to the short ball should stem from the line. Compulsive hooking and pulling can be counter-productive because of all the strokes in cricket, these are perhaps the most risky, the ones where the element of control is potentially the least.

That Shreyas punch of the air suggested a victory over himself, a victory of the strength of his mind. It was a visceral reaction, not aggressive or 'I've shown you', just an acknowledgement to himself that for all the 'outside noise' - one of Indian cricket's favourite modern-day phrases - he knows what he is doing.

That there is more to Shreyas than travails against the short ball doesn't need reiterating, but let's do so in any case. In 65 ODIs since his debut seven years back, he averages 48.18, he strikes at 102.48. An overwhelming majority of his 60 innings have come at No. 4, a tricky position for more reasons than one.

If Shreyas has walked in with the field restrictions in place inside the first 10 overs when only two are allowed outside the 30-yard circle, it means his team is in trouble, that he must rebuild, that the immediate need of the hour is steadying the ship rather than rocking the boat. If he comes in with the top three having done their job, he must then immediately hit top gear and at least sustain the momentum at the start of his innings, if not build exponentially on it. By this time, the field would have opened out, with four boundary-riders complementing five in the ring. The trick then is to target areas and bowlers, to play to one's strengths without compromising on singles and twos, the bedrock of any innings. It calls for great composure and understanding, for versatility and a wide range of strokes. Shreyas has showcased all that in ample measure. He averages four fours and a six an innings in ODIs, which translates to less than 50% of his runs coming through boundaries. And yet, the fact that he is able to score at better than a run a ball confirms his stature as a manipulator of fields and as someone adept at spotting gaps instead of seeing fielders.

Because India played only three ODIs in the whole of 2024, Shreyas was unable to build on his wondrous run at the 50-over home World Cup in October-November 2023. India fretted and worried and spent numerous anxious moments trying to get the right-hander ready for the 50-over flagship event after back surgery earlier in the year threatened a spanner in the works. Shreyas returned at the Asia Cup in Sri Lanka in early September and did his back again, but Rohit and head coach Rahul Dravid kept the faith.

That faith was rewarded amply when Shreyas warmed up for the big bash with a century against Australia in a bilateral series just two weeks before the teams met each other in their respective World Cup openers. Shreyas made an ominous start to the World Cup, dismissed for nought in Chennai by Josh Hazlewood, then embarked on a spectacular run that fetched him 82, 77, 128 not out and 105 in consecutive innings, the last of them coming off 70 deliveries in the semifinal against New Zealand when he hammered eight sixes at his beloved Wankhede Stadium.

Like the rest of the batting group, Shreyas found no joy in the ODIs in Sri Lanka in August last year. Batting second on square turners, he managed just 23, 7, and 8, trapped leg before twice by spinners. By then, he had lost his BCCI central contract after ignoring a diktat from the governing body to play for Mumbai in the Ranji Trophy, and he might have entertained doubts over keeping his place in the ODI XI despite his rip-roaring run at the World Cup when he was his team's third highest run-getter, behind Virat Kohli and Rohit.

His worst fears were on the verge of coming true on the eve of the first ODI against England in Nagpur until Kohli pulled up with a sore knee, necessitating a late-evening phone call from his captain informing Shreyas that he would be playing the following afternoon. That call cut short what was to have been a movie night for the 30-year-old, who grasped gratefully at the unexpected lifeline - or maybe we are exaggerating and he was always in the mix despite being originally benched for the first game - with a bruising 59 off 36 deliveries.

Shreyas is a bit of a 'roll batter' in the sense that when he gets on a roll, he isn't satisfied easily. Substantial knocks have tended to come in clusters - 71, 65, 70 and 53 in successive outings between August and December 2019, 44*, 103, 52 and 62 in a row in January-February 2020, and a stunning sequence of 80, 54, 63, 44, 50, 113*, 28*, 80, 49, 24 and 82 in 11 straight hits between February and December 2022. That he followed up 59 against the English in Nagpur with 44 and 78 in the last two matches should therefore come as no surprise.

Shreyas himself, as much as Rohit and head coach Gautam Gambhir, will be hoping these three are just the tip of the iceberg, the beginning that will snowball into plenty more impactful essays at the Champions Trophy beginning later this week. Shreyas now doesn't have to look over his shoulder, his presence at No. 4 pretty much a guarantee given how wonderful he is at controlling the innings from that slot in the 50-over format, by a distance his most successful variant at the international level. Behind Rohit, Shubman Gill and Kohli, and ahead of K.L. Rahul, Axar Patel, Hardik Pandya and Ravindra Jadeja, he looms as the dangerously unpredictable entity.

With almost all the others, there is a pattern to how they approach their innings. Shreyas isn't anything like that. He can explode from the beginning, he can build and cut loose. Outside the team environment, he is perhaps a touch undervalued and that must hurt a little, but within the group, he is an established and acknowledged leader. In his book, that will count for plenty, and plenty is what he will be eyeing in the desert sands over the next three weeks.

‘Post time-stamped photos of food served to students’

Social Welfare Department hostel wardens have been asked to follow this directive to address growing complaints about the quality and quantity of food being provided

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

Wardens of all hostels run by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) have to now post time-stamped photographs of the food being served to students at their hostels three times a day, on their account of the social media platform X. Stakeholders can provide feedback on the quality of the food as well.

To fix recurring complaints of food not being served regularly or bad quality of food being served at SWD hostels, the Department introduced the Food Transparency and Social Audit programme on a pilot basis in Bidar, Chamarajanagar and Raichur districts

The Social Welfare Department has launched a 24/7 helpline for anyone to raise complaints on food issues. FILE PHOTO

in November 2024. Later in January 2025, it was extended to Bengaluru Urban, Udupi, Mysuru, Bagalkot, Kolar, Belagavi and Tumakuru districts. Following good feedback for the initiative, the programme has now been extended to all hostels run by the department across the State from February 6.

H.C. Mahadevappa, Minister for Social Welfare, said that the health of the children studying or staying in the department hostels was the top priority. “We will ensure there is no compromise on the quality and safety of the food they receive,” he said, adding that the initiative aims to enhance public trust and provide real-time insights into student nutrition.

There are 1,979 pre-matric and post-matric hostels and 821 residential schools functioning under the SWD across the State with around 2,15,000 students.

After hostel wardens upload time-stamped photos, the department officials will check the uploaded pictures for both quantity, quality and hygiene, suggest changes if necessary and initiate action against those responsible if they find any shortcomings.

The Department has launched a 24x7 helpline for anyone to raise complaints on food issues. They have also published the email ID and phone numbers of officials to lodge complaints. Stakeholders can also provide feedback about the quality, hygiene of the meal on the basis of the pictures uploaded by the wardens and hostel staff.

These social media posts and the feedback is collated and the Department ranks districts based on their performance on this issue every week. According to the data published on February 14, Udupi ranks first, followed by Chamarajanagar, Mysuru and Raichur districts.

Now, free education for orphan children in State residential schools

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

The Social Welfare Department has now decided to provide free education to orphan children in its residential schools, including Morarji Desai Residential Schools, run by the Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society (KRIES) from 2025-26.

The Social Welfare Department issued an order to this effect on February 12. The order directs local authorities and KRIES to admit orphans to residential schools directly to class 6, without any entrance test.

COVID-19

This comes in the backdrop of the State government’s decision to provide free education to children orphaned during the COVID-19 pandemic, recently. Going a step further, the department has also taken steps to provide free education to all orphans in the State.

“An equal society can only be built by providing equal education opportunities to all children. So we have now decided to enrol all orphan children to our residential schools directly to class 6,” Social Welfare Minister H.C. Mahadevappa said.

Prey to anti-social elements

Another official said that there was always a possibility of orphans being misused by anti-social elements for begging or other illegal activities. Such children are also found to be victims of child labour and child marriages. “So it was thought that enrolling them and providing them education in residential schools is an appropriate measure,” the official said.

There are a total of 817 residential schools under the department, with 41,500 seats available for Class 6. Out of these, 50% seats are offered through entrance tests conducted by Karnataka Examination Authority (KEA), while the remaining 50% are offered to students from special categories, including children of manual scavengers, devadasis and others without an entrance test. Now orphaned children will also get admission to Class 6 without an entrance test from 2025-26.

KRIES has now written to all gram panchayats, urban local bodies, the Women and Child Development Department and the Labour Department to identify orphan children of appropriate age and get them admitted to residential schools run by KRIES.

“We need to identify orphans at the grassroots level. So we have roped in local bodies, the Women and Child Development and Labour Departments to identify and get them enrolled,” a KRIES official said.

From Page One

Natural calamities: ‘What State got was a fraction of total losses’

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda talking to *The Hindu* said poor compensation from the Union government has been a practice and this has now rightfully been observed in the World Bank report.

“Due to climate change, natural disasters are increasing year-on-year, also increasing the losses. The frequency of these calamities has increased, affecting more number of lives and livelihood. But the State which contributes greatly in terms of taxes is met with step-motherly treatment. While the gap between losses and compensation from the Central government is increasing, in 2023-2024 the Union government denied compensation, which is the right of the State in the federal structure. The State had to fight the Union government in the Supreme Court to take compensation,” he said.

Adding to the crisis, private insurance penetration remains alarmingly low in Karnataka, mirroring national trends. Less than 10% of households have insurance coverage, and only 30% of farmers and agricultural land are insured. This leaves a vast majority of people and businesses vulnerable to financial shocks caused by extreme weather events, the report said.

It further said that Karnataka was grappling with a significant shortfall in disaster risk financing (DRF) as there is no structured mechanism to assess risks and make informed decisions on diversifying funding sources.

The report also emphasised the need for Karnataka “to adopt advanced risk assessment models and explore blended finance mechanisms – combining public and private investments – to strengthen its disaster resilience”.

Integrating such strategies could help the State secure long-term financial sustainability while also achieving its climate adaptation and mitigation goals, it said.

‘Safe Routes to School’ project reworked to align with current traffic patterns

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

In a concerted effort to enhance safety and minimise accidents near school zones in Bengaluru, the city’s traffic police have rolled out a reworked ‘Safe Routes to School’ project again this year. This initiative focuses on designating and demarcating school zones more effectively, particularly in areas with a high concentration of educational institutions within the Central Business District (CBD).

A ‘school zone’ signboard installed by the Bengaluru Traffic Police on Museum Road. Residency Road and Museum Road are priority areas as they house around five schools each. K. MURALI KUMAR

Authorities have identified key school zones where multiple institutions are situated in close proximity. A traffic police official said areas like Residency Road and Museum Road have been prioritised, as both locations house around five schools each.

“We have pinpointed specific school zones that witness significant student movement. Our objective is to improve road safety measures in these areas to guarantee that children can travel to and from school without unnecessary risk,” said a police official.

As part of the initiative, traffic-calming measures have been introduced in school zones. The authorities have installed signboards and rumble strips made of thermoplastic material to slow down traffic and alert motorists when entering a school area. Officials believe these measures will ensure greater awareness among drivers and instill a sense of responsibility to prioritise student safety.

“The project aims to encourage children to walk or cycle to school by providing safe routes while also ensuring that school drop-off and pick-up points are well-organised and managed efficiently. Additionally, steps are being taken to regulate vehicular traffic around schools to prevent congestion and reduce the risk of accidents,” official added.

Move welcomed

Parents and students have welcomed the initiative, acknowledging its role in enhancing safety. “This is a much-needed move. School zones often witness chaotic traffic, and it is reassuring to see authorities taking steps to make these areas safer for our children,” said Asha Ramesh, whose child is enrolled in a school on Residency Road.

A student said, “It feels safer to cross the road now. Vehicles actually slow down, and there are clear signs to indicate that it’s a school zone.”

Officials say this is just the beginning. More areas will be incorporated into the project to better define and demarcate school zones.

Introduced by former Special Commissioner (Traffic) M.A. Saleem in 2012, the SRTS was a community-driven project developed in collaboration with the Education and the Transport Departments. It prioritised traffic decongestion and student safety. The initiative had been performing well, but police officials now say it has been updated to better align with Bengaluru’s current traffic conditions. “While the earlier version was successful, the latest improvements aim to enhance its effectiveness further,” official said.

‘Avoid using single-phase pump sets at night’

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

BESCOM has urged farmers to refrain from using single-phase pump sets in irrigation feeders at night.

“The State government currently ensures three-phase power supply for agricultural pump sets for four hours in the day and three hours at night. Additionally, under Nirantara Jyothi, rural households receive an uninterrupted 24-hour power supply,”a BESCOM official stated.

To support students residing in farmhouses and cater to household needs, single-phase power is supplied through irrigation feeders from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. However, some farmers have been using single-phase sets at this time, causing feeder tripping and interruptions in supply.

Arrested

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Halasuru Gate police arrested two goldsmiths from Rajasthan for stealing 2.5 kg of gold valuables from the shop they were working at in January.

The accused allegedly escaped to Delhi with the loot. The police tracked down Mahabeer Gujrar, 25, and Manish Prajapati, 20. Efforts are on to track down the third accused. H.T. Shekhar, DCP, Central Division, said the accused were working in the hallmark centre that authenticated and certified valuables.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **KADAMBATTU KANAKAVALLI,** W/o. Late. Kuttikote Bhaskaran, aged about 62 years, resident of No. 27/1, Sri Sailam, 3rd Cross, Ganesha Block, Sultanpalya, R.T.Nagar, Bangalore - 560032 has changed my name to **KADAMBATH KANAKAVALLI** vide Affidavit dated 12-02-2025 sowrn before Notary Leela, Bangalore.

DOCUMENTS LOST

I G.Sharath Kumar, S/o Surya Prakash Rao, Plot No.307, Chetana Housing Colony Jonnabanda old Alwal Secunderabad Telangana - 500010, I have lost / misplaced my Original Sale Deed of my of Plot with Sy. No:50/1 NOBEL Residency Site No:340/3, Khata no 218. Situated at Yelenahalli Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk. in this I have lodge a missing complaint with lost article report Ref#1479760/ 2025 dated 15.02.2025

If anyone found Please Contact: 89762 62899 / 90040 62899

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, FATHIMUNNISA, W/O: Zahid Sultan Syed, R/O: Flat–101, RHBL Prakrithi APR, Bileshivale–Byrati Rd, Doddagubbi, Kothanur PO, Bengaluru – 560077. Have Changed my Name to Fathim Unnissa, Affidavit date on 14/02/25.

I, POORNACHANDRA Upadhya Shrinivasa S/O Shrinivasa Upadhya born on 25 May 1975 residing at Flat No.354, B–2, DS Max Stonehill, Tulasipura Main Road, Anjanapura BDA Layout, Bangalore – 560062, have changed my name to Poornachandra Upadhya vide affidavit dated 14 Feb 2025 at Bangalore

I, Karanam Uday S/O, Jayaram Karanam R/o B412, Parimala Riviera, 1st A Main Road, Satya Sai Layout, Whitefield, Bangalore have changed my name to Uday Karanam.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, the undersigned **UPASNA CHAWLA**, W/o SANJAY CHAWLA, aged about 57 years, (Date of Birth 10.08.1966), presently residing at # 4037, Level-3, ‘Devon’, Prestige Kensington Garden, 17 HMT Main Road, Behind HMT CINEMA, Jalahalli East, Jalahalli Post, Bengdaluru-560 013, Karnataka, India, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **UPASNA SANJAY CHAWLA to UPASNA CHAWLA** henceforth I shall be known and called as **UPASNA CHAWLA** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 15th February 2025, sworn before Advocate and Notary **V. SRINIVASA REDDY**

CHANGE OF NAME

I, undersigned **PUSHPAVALLI DEVANAGUNDI**, Wife of MUNIRAJU, AGED ABOUT 46 YEARS, RESIDING AT DODDADUNNASANDRA, DEVANAGUNDI BENGALURU RURAL 560117, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **PUSHPAVALLI .V to PUSHPAVALLI DEVANAGUNDI VENKATESHAPPA** henceforth I shall be known and called as **PUSHPAVALLI DEVANAGUNDI VENKATESHAPPA** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 15-02-2025, sworn before Advocate and Notary **GANGARAJU .B.N at** Bangalore

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my client, **PADMA.V.** wife of T. Nagendra Rao, resident of No. 3, 2nd Main, Muneshwara Layout, Manorayanapalya, R.T. Nagar, Bangalore - 560032, has lost the original Partition Deed dated 17/08/2009 bearing Doc. No. HBB-1-00772/09-10 CD. No. HBBD16, registered in the office of the Sub Registrar, Hebbal, Bangalore, in respect of the schedule property and lodged a complaint before jurisdictional police. If any person find the same, may be returned to the undersigned immediately. (Lost Report No. 1478576/2025, Dt. 14/02/2025.

SCHEDULE

Southern portion of site / property NO. 40, PID No. 96-219-40, BBMP Katha No. 40/1, PID O. 96-219/40/1, Cholanayakanahalli, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, measuring in 600 Sq.ft.

K. VENKATESHAN, B.A., LLB
Advocate &Notary, Government of India
#3, Sri Ganesh Nilayam, Ground Floor, 1st Cross, Oil Mill Road, Opp. Kalyani Bar, Kammanahalli, Bangalore-560033
Mob : 9886776570

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the General Public, my client - **K.H. PADMA**, aged about 75 years, wife of late Chikkanna, r/at No.102/1, 4th Main, 4th Cross, Sadashivanagara, Tumakuru-572102, intend to purchase the property which is fully described in the schedule given hereunder from (1) **Mr. CHETHAN.H.B,** Aged about 39 years, s/o Mr. Babu.P & (2) **Mrs. RAJINI.P,** Aged about 35 years, w/o Mr. Chethan H.B, both are residing at No.1249/4, 7th Block, Sir M. Vishveshwaraiah Layout Vishwaneedam Post, Bengaluru-560 091.

Notice is hereby given to any person/Govt./Local Bodies/Banks claiming any right, title or interest over the said property may inform the same to my client’s counsel stated below, in writing together with all details and documents in support of such claim within **15 (Fifteen days)** from the date of this Notice.

If objections are not received within that date my client will go ahead with the purchase and no further objection will be valid after that.

SCHEDULE

ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL of Property, i.e. **BDA Site No.2609**, having **PID No.1306**, in the layout formed by Bengaluru Development Authority, **1st Block, Sir M. Vishveshwaraiah Layout**, Bengaluru, measuring East to West: 12.00 meters and North to South: 18.00 meters, totally measuring 216 square meters and is bounded on: East by : Property No.2608, West by : Property No.2610, North by : Road, South by : Property Nos.2615 & 2516

G.R. Gangadhara, Advocate
431, 2nd Floor, Alankar Pearl Plaza, K.G.Road, Bengaluru-560009. Mob: +91 9740296679
Email:grgangadhara@gmail.com
Place: Bengaluru Date:15.02.2025

EDUCATION HUB — A Business Initiative

Christ University NCC Bags Best Institution Award, for the Seventh Consecutive Year

Christ University’s National Cadet Corps (NCC) has added another feather to its cap, clinching the prestigious Best Institution Award for the seventh consecutive year in the Karnataka and Goa NCC Directorate. The award is a testament to the unparalleled commitment, discipline, and consistent achievements of its cadets. The NCC company established in 1969 has consistently inspired young minds to serve the nation. Since its establishment, the company has not only produced more than 100 officers in the Indian Armed Forces but has also maintained a remarkable strength of 200 plus cadets. The training year 2024-25 proved to be a year of high achievements. The Best Institution Award in both the Senior Division (for male cadets) and Senior Wing (for female cadets) in the whole Karnataka and Goa Directorate this year is attributed to the exceptional performance of the University’s NCC cadets. Further adding to their laurels, one cadet represented India in the Youth Exchange Programme (YEP) in Nepal, and four cadets attended the Services Selection Board (SSB) Super 30 conducted by the NCC Directorate. The Deputy Director General NCC Karnataka and Goa Directorate felicitated and awarded all the Cadets and institutions for their exemplary performance and for bringing laurels to the state of Karnataka. Dr Fr Jose CC appreciated the ANO and NCC cadets for their hard work, diligence and sincerity, braving all odds and working for the institution and the country at large.

Vidyashilp University - Navigating Exams Amid Shrinking Attention Span: A Psychologists’ Take

Dr. Sheetal Lakhani Assistant Professor, Psychology spoke about science-backed stategies to reclaim focus of shrinking attention spans and digital overload sabotage exam prep. In general, getting enough sleep, nutrition, and physical activity are crucial for maintaining focus and mental health. However, each individual’s coping plan may be different. Identifying what works for each person is important. Students can consider making note of personal triggers that lead to distraction, such as boredom, and replacing them with meaningful activities like exercise (short walks or stretching), puzzles, or art can be helpful. Tailoring the study environment, whether preferring silence or a group setting, home or library, can also boost productivity. While technology isn’t inherently villainous, its unchecked use rewires brains ill-suited for deep work. The goal isn’t to eliminate distractions, but to build self-awareness. Teach students to notice when their focus drifts–and gently guide it back. That skill will outlast any exam.

SDM Hospital, Sattur, Dharwad observes “World Cancer Day”

Recently SDM Hospital, Sattur, Dharwad observes “World Cancer Day”. The Department of Surgical Oncology on that day drives a Free Cancer check-up Camp to all and free Pap Smear Test to women in the Surgical Oncology OPD at Manjushree Block. 15% concession will be given for all other related tests on that day. Bringing awareness to the public about Cancer on right time and making a big difference in treatment is the objective of this free check-up camp. The Management of SDM Hospital requests all to make use of this free awareness camp for their healthy and better living.

Hindustan Aviation Academy (HAA) introduces DGCA CAR 147 Basic B1.3 Helicopter Turbine Course

Dr. K C Samuel, Chairman of Hindustan Aviation Academy inaugurated the DGCA CAR 147 Basic B1.3 Helicopter Turbine Course. Other Dignitaries include Wg Cdr Shankar R, Examination Manager, Sateesh Mysore, Dean of Aviation Studies, Prem Narain Ojha, Training Manager Mani Paul, Director Benil Benjamin George, Accountable Manager. With the number of helicopter fleets in India expected to triple in the coming years, the demand for skilled and qualified helicopter Maintenance Engineers is set to soar. Recognizing this immense potential, Hindustan Aviation Academy (HAA) introduced the course designed to equip students with industry-relevant expertise and hands-on training, by utilizing the latest in technology and training methodologies. Graduates who have completed the Aircraft Maintenance Engineering (AME) course for which Hindustan Aviation is a pioneer, are successfully placed with leading Airlines and airports across the globe. The launch of this course reaffirms HAA’s commitment to keeping our students up with the latest in Aviation and providing them the competitive edge they need, to advance their careers.

A walkathon for raising awareness on Cancer by Ramaiah Memorial Hospital

Following the success of previous awareness initiatives, Ramaiah Memorial Hospital (RMH) brought a walkathon to the city titled ‘Ramaiah Hope-A-Thon: Let’s Walk United to Win Against Cancer” as part of World Cancer Day awareness drive. The 5K walkathon, flagged off at the Hospital premises and culminating at the Dwaraka Auditorium of RMH recently. The event highlighted the hospital’s commitment to cancer awareness and advocating for the importance of early detection. More than 500 participants, including hospital staff, doctors, cancer survivors, and their families, joined the walk. The event was inaugurated by Dr. SC Nagendra Swamy, President, RMH, and Dr. K Harish, Director: Ramaiah Institute of Oncosciences cum HOD & Senior Consultant - Surgical Oncology. The route of the ‘RAMAIAH HOPE-A-THON’ took over 500+ participants through key landmarks, reinforcing the message of resilience and community-driven action.

AI-enabled cameras in Similipal Tiger Reserve send poaching plummeting

The devices are tucked away in the reserve's thick vegetation. When they sense movement, they capture an image, and then use a built-in chip to sort between object classes such as 'animals,' 'humans', and 'vehicles' in the image. If the chip deems it necessary, a camera can transmit the image to an end-user in 40 seconds

Nikhil Sreekandan

A TrailGuard AI camera unit seen at Similipal Tiger Reserve. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"Last year, we lost two of our men to poachers," Samrat Gowda, deputy director of the Similipal Tiger Reserve in Odisha, said. "Every time we come across them, the poachers are armed with a loaded gun."

But such encounters have become much less common of late. As part of an early alert system called TrailGuard AI, the Similipal Tiger Reserve was fitted with 100-150 cameras loaded with an artificial intelligence (AI) model. The cameras relay images of people and wildlife entering the forest to the model, which looks for poachers among them.

"Earlier, we didn't know when poachers entered. Now we have clear information about the area the poachers are in, so our people are prepared," Gowda said.

In the last 10 months, TrailGuard AI has helped wildlife officials at Similipal arrest 96 poachers and seize more than 86 country-made guns. In December alone, the team arrested over 40 poachers.

"House raids based on photo identification have given very good results," according to Gowda. "If this trend continues, I'm hopeful poaching can be reduced by at least 80%. Once that happens, naturally, our people will be safer, along with the forest and wildlife."

Proactive enforcement

The AI-enabled cameras are tucked away in the reserve's thick vegetation. They operate on a low-power mode by default but switch to a high-power mode when they sense movement, and capture an image. The camera then performs AI inference on the edge, meaning it uses the chip inside to sort between various object classes such as 'animals', 'humans', and 'vehicles' in the image. If the AI deems it necessary, it autonomously transmits an image using the cellular system attached to the camera to an end-user in 30-40 seconds.

"We have set up a control room in our headquarters, with a big screen, where we are alerted whenever there is a photo update," Gowda said. "We then immediately transmit the information on our WhatsApp groups and VHF radio."

Catching poachers in the forest still isn't straightforward. Wildlife officials use intelligence sources to identify the poachers caught on camera. These sources include their regular staff, who go undercover with poachers to collect information about who they are, the villages they hail from, and other details.

"Once we get 100% confirmation that these are the people that entered the forest, we will raid their house or village and arrest the person and forward them to the court with proper documentation," according to Gowda.

He also stressed the importance of proactive enforcement mechanisms backing up the inputs provided by TrailGuard. "Getting photos is the easy part, but after that what you do is most important. We are actively going and raiding [houses] and bringing people in. So both the technology and our on-ground efforts complement each other to give us good results," he added.

According to the latest department report, the arrests in 2024 led to one conviction, obtained within six months – fast, according to Gowda. His colleagues are hoping for two or three more convictions soon.

Smaller, cheaper, durable

TrailGuard AI was conceived and made by Nightjar Technologies, a social impact enterprise in Gurgaon that develops remote surveillance devices for conservation settings.

Its founder Piyush Yadav singled the TrailGuard camera systems out for praise. "There are two units," he explained. "One is the camera unit, the size of a pen, and the other is the battery/communication unit, the size of a notepad. They are attached using a two-metre-long cable. So it's not bulky but is rather a spread out design."

But according to Gowda, TrailGuard's best feature is its battery life. He said it lasts for "six months to one year based on the number of photos it sends," meaning officials don't have to make regular trips to replace batteries – a blessing in the challenging terrain of Similipal.

Catching poachers still isn't straightforward. Officials use intelligence sources to identify the poachers. Sources include their staff, who go undercover with poachers to collect information about who they are and the villages they hail from

According to Yadav, TrailGuard AI cameras cost roughly ₹ 50,000-53,000 per unit.

Access to tribal communities

The villages in and around Similipal are occupied by tribal communities. Hunting is part of their culture, even if many of them have moved away to other forms of sustenance. They need to be able to access the forest, too.

"The tiger reserve has traditionally had a lot of incursions from neighbouring communities around Similipal," said Aditya Panda, a naturalist, wildlife conservationist, and the honorary wildlife warden of Satkosia Tiger Reserve in the same State. "People come in large numbers to engage in bushmeat poaching."

Apart from TrailGuard cameras, the forest department uses regular camera traps in areas with no network, rendering it almost impossible for anyone in the forest to not be caught on camera.

But one result of this surveillance is that many villagers have stopped going into the forest for fear of being mistaken for poachers and arrested. Their ability to collect firewood and other non-timber forest products has concomitantly declined.

"We are discussing with the [local] people and are facilitating safer ways to access the forest, because it shouldn't be that because of one poacher everyone is restricted," Gowda said.

Wider use-case, adoption

The TrailGuard system has been an effective anti-poaching tool and Panda believes it can do more. "I think this sort of technology can be a gamechanger when it comes to patrolling and monitoring our protected areas, not only to intercept illegal entry and incursions but also in monitoring wildlife," he said.

"We have deployment ongoing in five States right now, at more than 14 sites," Yadav said of TrailGuard. It has also been implemented in the Kanha Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh and Dudhwa National Park in Uttar Pradesh with 20 and 10 cameras respectively, as part of efforts to mitigate human-wildlife conflict.

(Nikhil Sreekandan is an independent journalist who specialises in writing about the environment. nsreekandan@gmail.com)

THE GIST

Over the last 10 months, TrailGuard AI has helped wildlife officials arrest 96 poachers and seize more than 86 country-made guns. In December alone, over 40 poachers were arrested. Officials say, 'House raids based on photos have provided very good results'

The TrailGuard system comprises two units: a camera unit, the size of a pen, and a battery/communication unit, the size of a notepad. They are attached using a two-metre-long cable. The battery has a life of six months to one year based on the number of photos it sends

The technology is being deployed in five States at more than 14 sites. It has been implemented in the Kanha Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh and Dudhwa National Park in Uttar Pradesh with 20 and 10 cameras, respectively, as part of efforts to mitigate human-wildlife conflict

BIG SHOT

An image of an aurora was captured by cameras onboard the International Space Station on February 1 at an altitude of 419 km southwest of the coast of Western Australia. Its location makes this an example of aurora australis — the southern lights. NASA

WHAT IS IT?

Carbon capture: a pricey fix?

Vasudevan Mukunth

Global warming is the result of certain greenhouse gases — but especially carbon dioxide (CO_2) — building up in the air and preventing the planet from cooling as quickly as it would without them. Although some natural processes emit these gases, their build-up to dangerous levels is entirely due to emissions from human industrial activity, including the combustion of fossil fuels like coal and petrol.T

The human response to climate change has two prongs: adaptation and mitigation. Adaptation deals with how the world, its people, and their activities can adjust to an increasingly warming world. Mitigation is concerned with reducing CO_2 emissions.

An important type of technology that straddles both these efforts is carbon capture and sequestration (CCS). Here, a device sucks carbon or CO_2 out of an emission source, like the chimneys of a power plant, or the atmosphere itself, converts it to a different form, and stores it in a sealed container.

Representative image of a refinery. BRO TAKES PHOTOS

CCS has been controversial: among others, researchers have said it could create more 'room' to pollute by removing CO_2 from the air.

A study published on February 9 in the journal *Environmental Science & Technology* has now reported that deploying CCS technologies will also be more expensive than switching to renewable energy. According to the paper, policies that promote CCS "to reduce or offset CO_2 emissions" in 149 countries will incur 9-12-times the social cost of those countries switching entirely to wind, water, and solar power.

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, FEB. 17		
RISE	06:41	SET 18:26
RISE	22:14	SET 09:32
TUESDAY, FEB. 18		
RISE	06:41	SET 18:26
RISE	23:01	SET 10:07
WEDNESDAY, FEB. 19		
RISE	06:40	SET 18:26
RISE	23:50	SET 10:45

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	33	21
Mysuru	34	17
Bengaluru	33	17

Bengaluru Today
33°C Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be warm. Night also will be slight cool. Dry weather to prevail.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
32°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be little warm. Night also will be cool and hazy.

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THE HINDU
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61 railway stations in State to be redeveloped

'Amrit Bharat Station Scheme envisages station development on a continuous basis with a long-term approach. It involves preparation of master plans and implementation'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The provision of passenger amenities, including those under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, is generally financed under Plan Head – 53 'Customer Amenities'

The Indian Railways has identified 61 railway stations in Karnataka for redevelopment under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, aiming to modernise and upgrade infrastructure at these stations. Many railway stations in the State have not undergone redevelopment for several years, necessitating this large-scale initiative.

According to railway officials, "The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme envisages development of stations on a continuous basis with a long-term approach. It involves preparation of master plans and their implementation in phases to better amenities at the stations like improvement of station access, circulating areas, waiting halls, toilets, lift/escalators as necessary, cleanliness, free Wi-Fi, kiosks for local products through schemes like 'One Station One Product', better passenger information systems, executive lounges, nominated spaces for business meetings, landscaping etc., keeping in view the necessity at each such station."

An artist's impression of architectural plans of various railway stations set for redevelopment under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Structural works
The scheme also includes structural improvements such as enhancing station buildings, integrating stations with both sides of the city, and introducing multimodal transport connectivity. Additionally, it aims to improve amenities for Divyangjans, incorporate sustainable and environment-friendly solutions, introduce ballastless tracks, and construct 'roof plazas' where necessary. In the long run, select stations may also be developed into city centres.

Project timeline
Asked about the project timeline, a Railways source stated, "Development/redevelopment/upgradation of railway stations is complex in nature, involving the safety of passengers and trains and requiring various statutory clearances from urban/local bodies. These factors affect the completion time. Therefore, no timeframe can be indicated at this stage."

Under South Western Railway (SWR), 15 railway stations in the Bengaluru division will be redeveloped as part of the project. The stations earmarked for enhancement include Bangarpet, Channapatna, Dharmapuri, Doddaballapur, Hindupur, Hosur, Kengeri, K.R. Puram, Kuppam, Malleswaram, Malur, Mandya, Tumakuru, Ramanagara, and Whitefield.

Four zones
Regarding funding, an official clarified that the provision of passenger amenities, including those under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, is generally financed under Plan Head – 53 'Customer Amenities'. "The details of allocation under Plan Head – 53 are maintained Zonal Railway-wise and not State-wise or work-wise. The State of Karnataka spans across four railway zones – Central Railway, Southern Railway, South Central Railway, and South Western Railway," the official added.

Earlier, Minister of State for Railways and Jal Shakti V. Somanna had stated that railway stations in Karnataka would be developed at a total cost of ₹2,000 crore, indicating the scale of the project in enhancing railway infrastructure across the State.

To a 'Tipitaka' chanting

Monks, holding Buddhist flags, taking out a religious procession to chant sacred texts 'Tipitaka Saddhamma Sajjhayana', in Bengaluru on Sunday. AFP

'Elections to local bodies may be held anytime'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister and Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) chief D.K. Shivakumar, on Sunday, asked the Congress party cadre and leaders to be ready for local body elections in the State, which he said could be held anytime soon.

"There are indications that the court ruling on local body election could be soon. Elections could be held anytime. We have to be ready," he said speaking at the KPCC office, indicating the long-delayed civic polls in Bengaluru and other cities. Zilla and taluk panchayat elections may be held soon.

This statement by Mr. Shivakumar comes amidst rekindled hopes that civic polls may be held later this year. *The Hindu* had reported on the same this February 5. Minister Ramalinga Reddy had told *The Hindu* that civic polls may be held between June and August this year.

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar undertaking an inspection during his city rounds on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill
The Joint Legislature Committee examining the Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill, 2024 also held five public consultation meetings this week and is expected to submit its report by the end of this month. The Bill may be tabled in the upcoming Budget session of the Karnataka Legislature, sources said.

It can be recalled that the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike Council completed its terms in September, 2020, and ever since then is under administrator's rule.

Mr. Shivakumar also said that KPCC will soon form region-wise committees led by working presidents. "This committee will travel before March and achieve coordination. It has to submit a report identifying 50% women candidates," he said.

Later in the day, Mr. Shivakumar, who also holds charge of Bengaluru Development, went on city rounds inspecting various developmental works, especially white-topping of roads. Defending white-topping of roads, he said that the project "aims to build durable roads with a lifespan of 30 years" at an estimated cost of ₹1,700 crore.

"Presently, work is being carried out on 97 roads covering 150 km, across 14 different packages. I reviewed the progress today and directed that the work be completed swiftly. The target for completion is 11 months. In the next phase, white-topping will be extended to an additional 450 km of roads," he told media persons after the inspection. "The ₹1,700 crore for this project must be spent effectively on the roads. These roads must meet the required thickness standards and BWSSB's work should be completed simultaneously. Even after the completion of the project, quality checks will continue," he said.

Following complaints of several RO drinking water plants run by BBMP not functioning, he promised a comprehensive review of the plants to identify gaps and fix them. He also appealed to residents to take Cauvery water connections at the earliest before summer to avoid a water crisis.

Eight held for performing bike stunts on Sumanahalli flyover

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The bikers in the city have made the Sumanahalli flyover on Outer Ring Road (ORR) their new destination for stunts. Gangs of youth from many parts of the city come here during the wee hours to perform stunts.

During a special drive recently, the Kamakshipalya Traffic Police booked eight two-wheeler riders for wheeling on this stretch. The police seized six other two-wheelers after bikers abandoned them and fled.

Abhishek, 28, from Rajajinagar, slipped from a bike and sustained injuries while trying to escape from the police and dodge barricades put up to deter people from performing bike stunts. He is being treated at a private hospital.

The police also managed to pin down Girish, 19, from Hanumanth Nagar, Syed Suhail, 19, and Naveed, 24, from Nandini Layout.

"These groups move on the flyovers in groups to record videos of them performing bike stunts to post on social media. These gangs communicate through WhatsApp groups, to share locations and timings of the stunts," a senior traffic police official said.

To counter them, the traffic police have started checking the bikes for scratches on mudguards and exhaust pipes. This will help the police record their details and keep a check on them, a senior police officer said.

Man held for killing employer

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Not paying salary to his employee proved fatal for 48-year-old Ramaswamy, owner of an earthmover, who was hacked to death near his house in Chintamani recently.

The police on Sunday arrested the vehicle driver Nagesh, 28, from his hometown in Afzalpur in Kalaburagi district.

According to the police, the accused had been working as a driver for Ramaswamy for the last 1.5 years with a salary of ₹1,000 on a working day and Ramaswamy had not paid him salary dues of ₹1.5 lakh.

'The Hindu – Living Spaces 2025' draws to a close

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

'The Hindu – Living Spaces 2025', a property exhibition featuring over 200+ prestigious projects, apart from stalls from financial institutions, furniture and interiors sectors, drew to a close in the city on Sunday.

A prospective investor Shailendar, who was at the exhibition on Sunday, said that he drove 25 km and the journey was worth the experience, as the exhibition showcased several options for investment in the realty sector.

Over 1,500 prospective investors visited the exhibition over the two days. The stall holders were happy with the quality of the crowd at the exhibition.

Seven visitors, Pranupa S.P., Mohan R.K., Mohammed Noor Aman, M.A. Sridhar, Vishnu Bharadwaj, Anirudh S.K. and Anand R., won gold coins in the contests held at the exhibition.

Visitors in conversation at 'The Hindu – Living Spaces 2025' at Palace Grounds in Bengaluru. SUDHAKARA JAIN

The two-day event was made possible by a host of sponsors. Ajmera led the event as the title sponsor, with other prominent partners such as Sweet Home Realty (Powered By Sponsor) and Unitern (Platinum Sponsor). Additional sponsors included Canara Bank, Sumadhura, Bank of Baroda, Assetz, Bangalore Development Authority and Karnataka Housing Board as Gold Sponsors, and Puravankara, Ranka Group, Urbanest Realty, Elegant Builders and Developers, Earthen Projects, and Mother Earth as Silver Sponsors.

Associate sponsors included Sobha, DS-MAX, ATZ Properties, Guru Punvani, Alliance Square, Nischitha properties, Central Bank of India, IDBI bank, Punjab National Bank, Moggs Estate, Lokations, Kuteera Realty, Sai Panchami, Krishi Viswa Housing Co-operative Society Ltd, Rions Infra Projects, Land Trades Builders and Developers, SB Sanctuary, CoEvolve Estates, Telecom Employees and other Housing Welfare Trust, Neev Mattress.

The exclusive auto partner was Hyundai. The jewellery partner was Prathibha Jewellery House. The gift partner was Smart Grahak. The food partner was Empire Restaurant while the coffee partner was Levista Coffee.

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Number of registered drones in India till January 2025

29,501 The national capital has the maximum number of registered drones at 4,882, as per data from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation. After New Delhi, the highest numbers of registered drones are in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. PTI

People from Punjab in the first two batches of deportees from U.S.

95 Over 40% of the deportees in the first two batches were from Punjab. On February 5, 104 illegal Indian immigrants landed at the Amritsar airport of which 30 were from Punjab, along with 33 each from Haryana and Gujarat. The second batch of deportees arrived on Saturday night. PTI

Drones launched by Russia during overnight air attacks

143 The Ukrainian military said on Sunday that it shot down 95 drones and that 46 others didn't reach their targets due to electronic countermeasures. At least one person was injured and the attack also started a fire in a critical infrastructure building in the city of Mykolaiv. REUTERS

The discontinued U.S. grants allocated for voter turnout in India

21 in $ million. This has been discontinued by the Elon Musk led U.S. Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). DOGE has in total announced cuts of upto $486 million. It also cancelled $29 million allocated to "strengthening political landscape in Bangladesh". PTI

Number of militants arrested in Manipur in the past two days

11 On Sunday, the police said that seven of them were suspected cadres of the Kuki National Army (KNA). The KNA is a signatory of the tripartite pact signed in 2008 with the United Peoples' Front (UPF) and the Kuki National Organisation (KNO). PTI

COMPILED BY KUSHAL VARMA J.V.

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How does a President's rule function?

Why did the President of India issue a proclamation in Manipur after Chief Minister Biren Singh resigned? What are the different kinds of emergencies? Is a national emergency and President's rule the same? Has this power been misused by the Union?

EXPLAINER

Kartikey Singh

The story so far:
On February 13, four days after Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh's resignation, the Union government announced that President's rule has been implemented in the violence-hit State. A notification from the Ministry of Home Affairs stated that President Droupadi Murmu was satisfied that "a situation has arisen in which the government of that State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution."

Why has it been imposed?
The violence between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities, ongoing since May 2023, has claimed above 250 lives and displaced over 60,000 people. The conflict originated from the Meitei demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status, which the Kukis opposed, fearing loss of job opportunities and other affirmative actions meant for STs. A political crisis erupted in the State after Mr. Singh resigned on February 9, and the State BJP leadership struggled to reach a consensus on his successor.

What does the Constitution say?
Emergency provisions, inspired by the German Constitution and outlined in Part XVIII of the Indian Constitution, protect India's sovereignty, unity and security. They empower the Central government to address extraordinary crises by temporarily assuming control to ensure stability and safeguard the democratic framework. The Constitution provides for three types of emergencies – national (Article 352), State (Article 356) and financial (Article 360).

In Manipur, the President has proclaimed a "state emergency" – popularly known as "President's Rule" or "Constitutional Emergency" – by exercising powers under Article 356. This fulfils the Union's obligation under Article 355 to protect States against 'external aggression' and 'internal disturbance' (such as separatist or sectarian violence or calamities beyond a State's control) and to ensure that State governments operate as per the Constitution. When a State's "constitutional machinery" fails due to non-performance or malperformance, Article 356(1) empowers the President to issue a proclamation– upon receiving a report from the Governor or otherwise – if she is satisfied that the State government cannot function constitutionally. This effectively transfers all executive functions of the State to the Centre and legislative functions to Parliament while leaving the High Court's (HC) powers unaffected. Additionally, Article 365 provides that if a State fails to comply with any Union directions under constitutional provisions, the President may declare a "Constitutional Emergency."

As per Clause 3 of Article 356, the proclamation must be laid before each House of Parliament, and unless approved by a 'simple majority' in both Houses, it ceases after two months. Once approved, it remains effective for six months from the proclamation date, with further six-month extensions requiring additional Parliamentary approval. Renewal beyond one year is allowed only if two conditions are met – an Emergency has been declared in the country or any part of the State, and if the Election Commission certifies that President's rule is necessary due to difficulties in conducting State elections. However, in no case can the proclamation remain effective for more than three years, and the President may revoke or vary it at any time by a subsequent proclamation.

At a standstill: Personnel keep vigil after security measures were increased after the imposition of President's rule in Manipur, in Imphal, on February 14. PTI

How is a 'constitutional emergency' different from a 'national emergency'?
Article 352 governs the proclamation of a "national emergency," which has been invoked thrice – during the 1962 India-China war, the 1971-armed conflict with Pakistan, and in 1975 on grounds of "internal disturbance." In 1975, then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared the emergency after the Allahabad High Court, in *The State of Uttar Pradesh versus Raj Narain* (1975), found her guilty of "electoral malpractices" and debarred her from holding any elected post.

Unlike a "State emergency," proclaiming a "national emergency" requires that the President be satisfied that India's security – or any part of its territory – is threatened by war, external aggression, or armed rebellion. The 44th Constitutional amendment (1978) introduced multiple safeguards to prevent misuse. It replaced "internal disturbance" with "armed rebellion", mandated a written recommendation from the Cabinet (rather than just the Prime Minister), and shortened the parliamentary approval window from two months to one month. It also clarified that Articles 20 and 21 cannot be suspended, and that the President must revoke the proclamation if the Lok Sabha passes a resolution disapproving it. Crucially, the amendment restored judicial review of the President's satisfaction in proclaiming an emergency, a safeguard removed by the 38th Constitutional amendment (1975).

Unlike a "constitutional emergency" (which can last up to three years), a "national emergency" has no time limit. Additionally, while the President's rule (Article 356) requires a 'simple majority' for parliamentary approval, a national emergency needs a 'special majority'. In a national emergency, the State executive and legislature continue to function, whereas under President's Rule, the State executive is dismissed, and the legislature is suspended or dissolved. However, the Manipur Assembly, which has a tenure till 2027, has not been dissolved but is placed under "suspended animation". This means that the Assembly is temporarily "paused", allowing its revival if 'political stability' is restored.

Does it affect fundamental rights?
President's rule does not affect citizens' fundamental rights, unlike a national emergency, where under Article 358, freedoms under Article 19 become inoperative, and the President may suspend other fundamental rights, except Articles 20 and 21. Under President's Rule, the President acquires extraordinary powers, with the Governor, on her behalf, administering the State with assistance from the Chief Secretary or advisers appointed by the President. Additionally, Article 357 allows Parliament to confer legislative power on the President and authorise delegation to another authority while also giving the President power to sanction expenditure from the State's Consolidated Fund.

How often has it been imposed?
Though Dr. B.R. Ambedkar hoped it would remain a "dead letter," President's rule has been imposed nearly 134 times across 29 States and UTs since the Constitution took effect in 1950, reflecting its dual role as both a crisis-management tool and a politically contentious measure. The very first application of Article 356 occurred in June 1951 in Punjab. Manipur is tied with Uttar Pradesh for the most frequent imposition of President's Rule, at 10 each – driven by chronic political instability – with Manipur's latest imposition bringing its total to 11. The longest President's Rule in Manipur lasted two years and 157 days (1969-1972). Jammu & Kashmir holds the record for the longest cumulative duration, over 12 years (4,668 days), due to militancy and separatist movements, followed by Punjab (over 10 years, 3,878 days) and Puducherry (over seven years, 2,739 days).

What has the SC said about the use and misuse of President's rule?
For a long time, courts upheld the Centre's frequent unusual imposition of President's rule. However, the landmark *S.R. Bommai versus Union of India* (1994) judgment redefined these powers. Referencing the Sarkaria Commission's recommendation that Article 356 be used only as a last resort, the SC observed, "The Constitution of India has created a federation but with a bias in favour of the Centre. ...But that does not mean that States are mere appendages of the Centre"... It also highlighted the Commission's points that "constitutional machinery" could fail due to political crises, internal subversion or fiscal breakdown, among other factors.

Further, the SC held that the President's power under Article 356 is conditional, not absolute, and that any proclamation is subject to judicial review. Both the SC and HCs can strike it down if found *mala fide* or based on irrelevant or extraneous grounds. The top court further clarified that the President cannot dissolve the assembly without Parliament's approval and that the Centre must first issue a warning notice to the erring State, seeking an explanation. Once proclaimed, the State government has to go, as two governments in one sphere is impermissible. Moreover, the SC clarified that President's rule must be invoked only for breakdowns of "constitutional machinery" (distinct from ordinary law-and-order failures) and never for political gains.

Kartikey Singh is a final year student at RGNUL, Patiala, Punjab.

THE GIST

- Emergency provisions, inspired by the German Constitution and outlined in Part XVIII of the Indian Constitution, protect India's sovereignty, unity and security.
- Though Dr. B.R. Ambedkar hoped it would remain a "dead letter," President's rule has been imposed nearly 134 times across 29 States and UTs since the Constitution took effect in 1950, reflecting its dual role as both a crisis-management tool and a politically contentious measure.
- For a long time, courts upheld the Centre's frequent unusual imposition of President's rule. However, the landmark *S.R. Bommai versus Union of India* (1994) judgment redefined these powers.

HITES
HLL INFRA TECH SERVICES LTD

HITES on behalf of DMER, Govt. of Maharashtra invites online bids for construction of following buildings in Vilasrao Deshmukh Government Medical College, Latur:
i. **New Medicine, Pediatric, Chest and Skin 400 bedded Hospital building (PAC: Rs.80,46,83,600.00)**
ii. **New OPD building (PAC: Rs.66,08,07,830.55)**
For tender details and bid submission, please visit **https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app** and **www.hllhites.com**. Corrigendum/amendments etc. if any will be notified on this portal/ website only and separate advertisement will not be made for this.

VP (ID) HITES South Operations

ATAL BHUJAL YOJANA
(Minor Irrigation and Groundwater Development Department)
Office of the Project Director, State Program Management Unit (SPMU), #1/1, 2nd Floor, K.S.F.C Bhavan, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560 052.

No: ABHY/SPMU/PROC/29/2024-25 Date: 15.02.2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Only through kpp portal)

SPMU, Atal Bhujal Yojana, invited tender from bidders in two cover system through kpp Portal for **"Construction of wire screen filter injection well for artificial recharge of groundwater along with 2 year operation and maintenance in Atal Bhujal Yojana, Karnataka in 05 Packages"**

The detailed notification regarding eligibility and other details can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** The tender document can be downloaded through "kpp portal" from **17.02.2025 onwards** and last date for receipt of tender is on or **before 25.02.2025, 17.00 hrs.** Further details can be obtained from the office hours from **10:00 hrs. to 17:30 hrs.**

Sd/-
Tender Inviting Authority,
SPMU, Atal Jal, Karnataka

DIPR/CP/AAPL/RO5073/24-25

ZILLA PANCHAYATH, CHAMARAJANAGARA
Backward Classes Welfare Department
District Administrative Office, Room No. 131, First Floor, Chamarajanagara
Email : dobcmchamarajanagara@gmail.com Phone : 08226-222180

No. BCWD/CW-02/CR-48/2024-25 Date : 13-02-2025

E-Procurement Short Term Tender Notification

Sub. : E-Procurement Short Term tenders are invited for procuring food supplies for pre-matric and post-matric hostels functioning under Chamarajanagar District Backward Classes Welfare Department for the year 2024-25 and 2025-26.

1. Tender Notification Date : No. BCWD/CW-02/CR-48/2024-25, Date : 13-02-2025
2. Tender Amount Rs. 1174.00 Lakhs.
3. Start date for upload Tender from Date : 13-02-2025
4. Pre Bid meeting Date : 20-02-2025 Time : 11.30 am
5. Last date to upload tender form date : 28-02-2025 Time : 17.00 O' clock.
6. Place date and time to opening Technical bid Date : 03-03-2025 Time 17.30 O'clock, District Office, Backward Classes Welfare Department, Administrative Office, Room No. 131, First Floor, Chamarajanagara.
7. Place date and time to Opening Financial Bid Date : 10-03-2025 at 11.30 O'Clock, District Office, Backward Classes Welfare Department, Administrative Office, Room No. 131, First Floor, Chamarajanagara.
8. EMD amount to be paid with Tender Form : 15,00,000-00.
9. Concerned Officer Name, Office Address and contact No. for Correspondence : District Officer, Backward Classes Welfare Department, District Administrative Office, Room No. 131, First Floor, Chamarajanagara, Ph. 08226-222180.

Sd/- District Officer
Backward Classes Welfare Department,
Chamarajanagar Dist., Chamarajanagar

DIPR : CHANAR:622:2024-25

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT URBAN DEVELOPMENT CELL,
Tumakuru District, Tumakuru. Telephone no.0816-2955247
E-Mail:dudc_tkr@yahoo.co.in, ka.tumakuru.dudc@gmail.com

No:DUDC/Nagarothana Phase -04/CR/01/2022-23 Dated:12-02-2025

Tender Notification

The Executive Engineer, DUDC, Tumkur District, Tumkur invites tenders through KPP Portal in One and Two cover system eligible bidders for Chief Minister Amruth Nagarothana (Municipality) Project (Phase-4) works (change of Action Plan) in ULBs of Tumakuru District as given below:-

(In. Lakhs)

SL. No	INDENT No	Amount put to Tender	EMD
1	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/BD/WORK_INDENT32184/CALL-2**	369.94	5.55

Bidders can obtain information of tenders through Karnataka Public Procurement portal at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Calendar of Events and other information are as follows:

1	Period of downloading Tender Documents from E-procurement portal	:	**11-02-2025 to 14-03-2025 upto 17:00 hours**
2	Last Date for submission of tenders	:	**14-03-2025 upto 17:00 hours**
3	Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids)	:	**15-03-2025 17:30 hrs at DUDC, Tumakuru**

(In. Lakhs)

SL. No	INDENT No	Amount put to Tender	EMD
1	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/WS/WORK_INDENT34900**	11.65	0.29
2	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/WS/WORK_INDENT32245/CALL-2**	100.00	2.00
3	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/BD/WORK_INDENT31610/CALL-2**	20.00	0.50
4	**INDENT No: DMA/2024- 25/BD/WORK_INDENT33070**	150.00	2.25
5	**INDENT No: DMA/2024- 25/BD/WORK_INDENT35510**	190.70	2.86

Bidders can obtain information of tenders through Karnataka Public Procurement portal at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Calendar of Events and other information are as follows:

1	Period of downloading Tender Documents from E-procurement portal	:	**11-02-2025 to 26-02-2025 upto 17:00 hours**
2	Last Date for submission of tenders	:	**26-02-2025 upto 17:00 hours**
3	Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids)	:	**27-02-2025 17:30 hrs at DUDC, Tumakuru**

(In. Lakhs)

SL No	INDENT No	Amount put to Tender	EMD
1	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/BD/WORK_INDENT31849/CALL-3**	50.67	0.51
2	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/WS/WORK_INDENT32043/CALL-3**	15.00	0.38
3	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/BD/WORK_INDENT33081/CALL-3**	25.02	0.50
4	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/RD/ WORK_INDENT32512/CALL-3**	50.91	1.02
5	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/WS/WORK_INDENT32523/CALL-3**	50.00	1.00
6	**INDENT No:DMA/2024-25/BD/ WORK_INDENT 30867/CALL-3**	43.25	0.87
7	**INDENT No:DMA/2024-25/RD/ WORK_INDENT22827/CALL-3**	84.70	1.70
8	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/BD/WORK_INDENT32045/CALL-3**	90.03	0.90
9	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/OW/WORK_INDENT32562/CALL-3**	37.00	0.37
10	**INDENT No: DMA/2024-25/OW/WORK_INDENT33399/CALL-2**	21.90	0.26

Bidders can obtain information of tenders through Karnataka Public Procurement portal at **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Calendar of Events and other information are as follows:

1	Period of downloading Tender Documents from E-procurement portal	:	**11-02-2025 to 27-02-2025 upto 17:00 hours**
2	Last Date for submission of tenders	:	**27-02-2025 upto 15:00 hours**
3	Date of Opening of Tenders (Technical Bids)	:	**28-02-2025 15:01 hrs at DUDC, Tumakuru**

Postponement of calendar of events and addendum (if any) will be notified only in Karnataka Public Procurement portal and not published in newspapers.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
District Urban Development Cell, DC Office, Tumakuru.

DIPR/TUM/RO-167/24-25/Oysters

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Tel: 022 - 222600250 /22600251/22600334 Email: igm.mumbai@spmcil.com Web: https://www.indiagovtmint.in

NOTICE

BOOKING OPEN FOR "2900TH Janm Kalyanak of Parshvanath Bhagwan" and "2800TH Nirvan Kalyanak of Parshvanath Bhagwan" Commemorative Coins.

India Government Mint, Mumbai (A unit of Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd.) is pleased to notify booking of Commemorative coins in Proof and Uncirculated varieties of following themes.

Theme	Proof (Rs.)	UNC (Rs.)
2900TH Janm Kalyanak of Parshvanath Bhagwan (Denomination of ₹900) - Folder Packing	**6900.00**	**6685.00**
2900TH Janm Kalyanak of Parshvanath Bhagwan (Denomination of ₹900) - Wooden Packing	**7275.00**	**NA**
2800TH Nirvan Kalyanak of Parshvanath Bhagwan (Denomination of ₹800) - Folder Packing	**6900.00**	**6685.00**
2800TH Nirvan Kalyanak of Parshvanath Bhagwan (Denomination of ₹800) - Wooden Packing	**7275.00**	**NA**

The above-mentioned Commemorative Coins can be booked online on our website https://www.indiagovtmint.in. Alternately, the Commemorative Coins can be ordered offline by submitting an order form available on our website or Commemorative Coins are also available at our Sales Counter @ Shahid Bhagat Singh Marg, Fort, Mumbai – 400001.
***50gms Silver Coin on Shree Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir, Ayodhya is also available for Sale (both Website & at Sales Counter)**
For online booking please visit our web site: https://www.indiagovtmint.in

Follow us on : @SPMCILINDIA /SPMCILIndia /spmcilindia

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER
(Only through KPP-Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from registered Agencies for the following works:

Office of the Chief Engineer (East), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru - 560009

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender EMD (in Rs.)		Last Date & Time for Submission of Tender	Date & Time for Opening of Tender
1	East-1	BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/4096/ 2024-25 Date: 14.02.2025 (3rd Call)	1	Rs.47,71,061/- Rs.95,450/-	24.02.2025 upto 4:00 PM	25.02.2025 after 5:00 PM
2			2	Rs.37,96,640/- Rs.76,000/-		
3		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/4096/ 2024-25 Date: 14.02.2025 (4th Call)	3	Rs.64,46,206/- Rs.1,28,930/-		
4			4	Rs.57,44,679/- Rs.1,15,000/-		
5			5	Rs.81,71,287/- Rs.1,63,430/-		
6		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/4096/ 2024-25 Date: 14.02.2025 (5th Call)	6	Rs.68,64,424/- Rs.1,37,300/-		
7			7	Rs.43,84,731/- Rs.87,700/-		
8			8	Rs.40,87,811/- Rs.81,800/-		

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (East-1)**

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurment process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/BCPL/5088/2024-25

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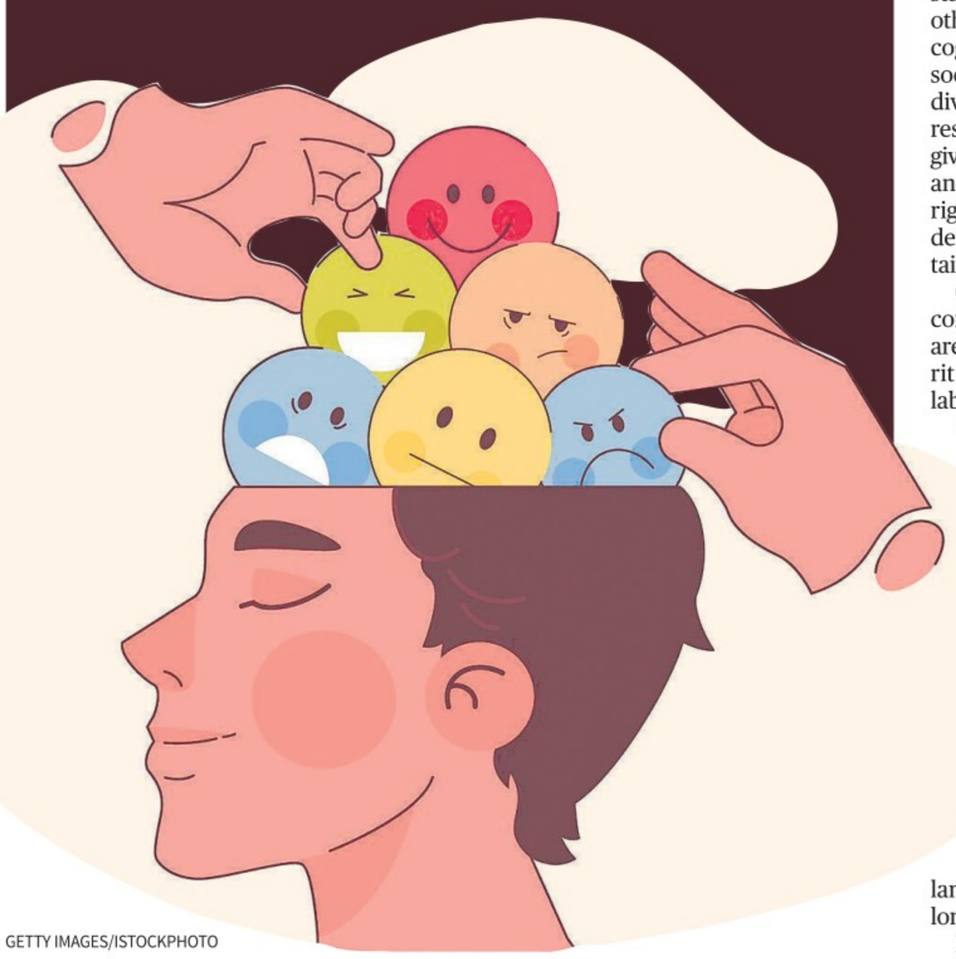
Key to a humane world

Socio-emotional learning helps students prepare for a sophisticated future with sensitivity and empathy



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Geeta Gopinath
Ameen Omar Shareef

The world today has greater connectivity and faster exchange of information. Further, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has created a new paradigm for human existence. However, the focus on greater technical expertise can limit human touch and sensitivity. It can create robotic individuals bereft of human emotions or connections. This makes social-emotional learning (SEL) crucial, as it focuses on developing life skills such as emotional intelligence, empathy, self-awareness, and responsible decision-making and helps students manage stress, develop resilience, and lead balanced lives.

Research has shown that SEL improves social-emotional behaviour and academic performance, and extends the perimeters of education to include the human element in a technologically charged world. It helps manage emotions, develop relationships, set and achieve goals, and make responsible decisions. It involves recognising and respecting each learner's unique attributes and tailoring the teaching according to these attributes.

SEL involves understanding personal strengths and identifies areas of improvement to build confidence and self-efficacy. The next aspect is effective self-regulation of one's emotions, thoughts, behaviours, and actions. This helps manage stress and control one's impulses.

Benefits

Learning is not isolated to the personal level. Students become socially aware and learn to understand and empathise with others and are tuned to recognising and respecting social norms and cultural diversities. They learn to respect other perspectives, give space for others' views and advocate for human rights. SEL teaches students to develop and maintain healthy relationships.

Communication and conflict resolution skills are nurtured through a spirit of cooperation and collaboration and desire to achieve shared goals. The approach enables the person to be a decisive and responsible individual who considers consequences of actions to all and evaluates situations to solve problems effectively. There is holistic integration that balances short- and long-term goals.

Educational institutions can integrate the elements of SEL in the curriculum, and extracurricular activities, thus creating a supportive environment for student. This leads to better all-round performance by providing emotional congruence, better communication and teamwork skills and problem-solving abilities. Learners become more engaged in communities and learn to use their strengths for social upliftment.

The most appropriate method to implement SEL in schools is by incorporating its principles into the curriculum of each subject. This could include group activities that foster teamwork and communication or discussions about emotional topics encouraging students to reflect. Educators should implement blended content effectively and efficiently. Further, the support of parents and the community is necessary for successful implementation through PTA.

Community members can create support groups that are involved in the skill-building process.

SEL is the key to retaining humanness in a changing technologically enhanced mechanical environment and improves the student's ability to face technological advances and prepare for a more sophisticated future with sensitivity and empathy.

Geetha Gopinath and Ameen Omar Shareef are Faculty of Economics, National Institute of Technology, Kozhikode.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Narotam Sekhsaria Scholarships
An initiative of the Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation
Eligibility: An Indian national residing in India who has graduated from an accredited Indian institution and is under 30 years old as of January 31, 2025, and plan to pursue a PG degree in top-ranking institutions in India or abroad, starting in the Fall 2025.
Rewards: Interest-free loans and mentorship
Application: Online
Deadline: March 17
www.b4s.in/edge/NSSP1

India High Fliers Undergraduate Scholarships
An opportunity provided by the University of Birmingham, the U.K.
Eligibility: Domiciled resident of India holding an offer for a full-time UG programme and is classified as overseas fee-payer.
Rewards: £5,000 for the first year
Application: Offline applications through local representatives and partnered schools
Deadline: May 31
www.b4s.in/edge/IHFS1

Indus Towers Scholarship Programme
A CSR initiative of Indus Towers Ltd.
Eligibility: Open to Indian citizens between 14 and 30 years as on July 1, 2023, with 40% disability and belonging to the BPL or EWS category with an annual family income below ₹6 lakhs.
Rewards: ₹3,00,000 and other benefits
Application: Shishu Sarothi, Executive Director Centre for Rehabilitation and Training for Multiple Disability Off Ram Krishna Mission Road, Birubari Guwahati 781016, Assam, Contact: (0361)-2470990/2478912/ 920704981
Deadline: July 24
www.b4s.in/edge/ITSP3

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

SBI Youth for India Fellowship

The SBI Foundation has opened registrations for the 13th batch of its SBI Youth for India Fellowship focusing on Health, Rural Livelihood, Food Security, Environmental Protection, Education, Water, Technology, Women's Empowerment, Self-Governance, Social Entrepreneurship, Traditional Craft, and Alternate Energy.

Visit apply.youthforindia.org for more details.

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GETTY IMAGES

How have Big Tech companies back-tracked on their DEI goals?

Why were Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programmes initiated in the first place? Why have many tech giants suddenly decided to put an end to their respective DEI initiatives? Do such programmes facilitate remote working for persons with disabilities?

Sahana Venugopal

The story so far:

When U.S. President Donald Trump returned to the White House, million-dollar donations poured in from Big Tech companies and their CEOs. During Mr. Trump's inauguration, some prominent figures included his adviser and major donor Elon Musk, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg. Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, Apple CEO Tim Cook, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, and TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew. As Trump settled into his role for the second time, notable U.S. companies including Google, Meta, and Amazon announced (or quietly made) changes to their existing DEI initiatives. They either rolled back ongoing programmes and goals, or decided to stop pursuing new DEI plans.

What is DEI?

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) refers to a wide range of principles and practices aimed at enriching a space by making sure all groups of people are represented (diversity), provided with measures to ensure equality by repairing past harms (equity), and given the support they need to thrive alongside their peers (inclusion). DEI reminds employers and employees alike that workplaces of the past often lacked equal rights for all or excluded talented individuals due to factors such as sexism, racism, religious hate, casteism, ableism (discrimination against people with disabilities), queerphobia, or other forms of bigotry.

In the U.S., the 2020 murder of George Floyd by a white police officer triggered nationwide outrage and a need to reflect on the inequality affecting Black people across all levels of society. However, some tech companies championed global diversity efforts long before 2020.

DEI schemes such as hiring diverse individuals, funding their training, or reserving specific opportunities for them are meant to improve the representation of different communities in the workplace, so that a company's products and services can better reflect their general buyers or users.

Why do people oppose DEI?

Critics of DEI initiatives come from a range of political backgrounds. While some believe that corporate DEI measures are band-aids on a bullet wound that fail to address systemic injustice, others are convinced that DEI hiring processes unfairly reject talented individuals from majority groups.

Mr. Musk, for example, is a vocal critic of DEI. He has frequently used the phrase as a slur as he claims that DEI kills art, promotes racism across industries, and even puts unqualified people in critical/life-saving positions. "DEI means people DIE," he has posted on X in January, despite recently expressing his strong support for the H1B visa category.

Which tech companies are getting rid of DEI measures?

Support for DEI initiatives is frequently perceived as a left-wing or even communist stance, which has alienated many leaders or institutions trying to closely align themselves with U.S. President Donald Trump's right-wing government. Mr. Trump in fact issued an executive order titled, 'Ending Radical And Wasteful Government DEI Programs And Preferencing,' where DEI initiatives were referred to as "illegal and immoral discrimination programs."

Amazon is stopping diversity and inclusion programmes, while a senior executive said that the company still wanted to "foster a more truly inclusive culture," reported *Bloomberg*. The e-commerce giant noted on its website that it was still supporting its employee-led groups, such as 'Amazon People with Disabilities,' 'Black Employee Network,', and 'Glamazon' for all those interested in LGBT+ issues.

Meanwhile, Meta has scrapped its fact-checking programme, and loosened limits around sensitive topics such as gender/immigration while Mr. Zuckerberg has publicly complained about a lack of 'masculine energy' in the workplace. Meta is also getting rid of DEI programmes for employees and diversity efforts for suppliers, apart from ending representation goals for women and ethnic minorities, reported *Axios*, citing an internal memo. "Instead of equity and inclusion training programs, we will build programs that focus on how to apply fair and consistent practices that mitigate bias for all, no matter your background," said Meta's memo, per *Axios*.

For its part, Google is no longer working to meet its diversity hiring goals, even though Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai previously committed to hiring more leaders from underrepresented communities, reported *WSJ*. The news outlet also noted that Alphabet's annual report left out a line about its DEI commitments. Furthermore, Google's Calendar removed references to Pride Month and Black History Month, noting that users could add these in if they specifically wanted to.

Other tech companies that have edited their DEI policies, or their wording, include Disney, Comcast, GE, Intel, PayPal, and Regeneron, according to *NPR*.

Which companies still support DEI?

Despite Apple CEO Tim Cook's attendance at Mr. Trump's inauguration, Apple in its 2025 annual meeting notice strongly criticised a think tank's potential proposal to "consider abolishing its Inclusion & Diversity program, policies, department and goals." Apple called the proposal unnecessary and said it was an equal opportunity employer. "The proposal also inappropriately attempts to restrict Apple's ability to manage its own ordinary business operations, people and teams, and business strategies," said the iPhone-maker.

Meanwhile, McKinsey's Global Managing Partner Bob Sternfels stated in an employee memo in February that the consulting firm would continue to pursue diversity as well as a system that rewards merit. "The answer is yes. We will continue to boldly pursue both, because these two things together – our diverse meritocracy – is what makes us distinctive and has defined who we are over our nearly 100 years," he was quoted as writing, per *Bloomberg*.

Other companies that have committed to DEI in spite of popular pressure against it, include Costco, Microsoft, and Pinterest.

"We continue to believe it's the business of Microsoft to be diverse and inclusive so we can build products, services, and a workforce that empowers the world. The business case for D&I is not only constant but stronger than ever," wrote Microsoft's Chief Diversity Officer and Corporate Vice President of Talent and Learning, Lindsay-Rae McIntyre, on December 20, 2024, in a LinkedIn post.

What does DEI in tech look like?

Countless tech workers – and their families, by extension – receive numerous benefits from DEI measures already in place at their work. These benefits include visa sponsorship for foreign job applicants (which Mr. Musk himself supports), company cafeteria menus that cater to a range of diet restrictions, wheelchair-friendly elevators and toilets, hybrid work mode for caretakers/parents, remote work options for people with disabilities or medical conditions, and even corporate protection from inappropriate questions about one's body, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital status.

DEI measures are meant to protect Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai from racism, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg from antisemitism, and OpenAI CEO Sam Altman from queerphobia and antisemitism, not to mention their employees.

On the flip side, DEI does not guarantee a workplace where everyone feels equally respected or protected. For example, many companies which commit to DEI hiring principles on paper, may automatically turn down immigrants or refugees who need visas.

Furthermore, sweeping DEI measures in one location may fail to take into consideration lesser-known forms of discrimination present in other cultures, such as colourism or casteism. The presence of DEI programmes can also lead to meritorious women, ethnic minority workers, or LGBTQIA+ employees facing more discrimination as others assume they were hired due to their identities, rather than their skills.

While numerous debates rage around DEI in the U.S., what is certain is that a tenuous tech market is set to become even more unstable in the future for those who do not fall neatly into the majority.

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

She drove a wedge between us

Her latest party at the new apartment was a total snoozefest. Even her children slept off!

S. Upendran

"You look rather tired. Have you been up all night reading the book you bought a couple of days ago?"

"There's a major problem at the office. So, we've all been working rather late. As far as the novel is concerned, I've given up on it. Found it to be one big yawn."

"A big yawn? What do you mean?"

"You should be able to figure out the meaning. Tell me, when does a person normally yawn?"

"When the person is very sleepy."

"Yes, we all yawn when we're sleepy. Can you think of any other occasion..."

"A person also yawns when he's bored!"

"That's right! You also yawn when the person you're talking to or the book you're reading is boring. So, when you say that the book was a total yawn, what you mean is that it was very boring."

"How about this example? The match between India and Sri Lanka was a yawn."

"Yes, it was rather one sided, wasn't it? The expression is mostly used in informal contexts."

"My father says that most academic conferences are a total waste of time."

"My uncle, who is a professor, calls them a snoozefest."

"Snoozefest? What does it mean?"

"Do you know what 'snooze' means?"

"Of course, I do! When you 'snooze', you sleep for a very short time. You nap."

"Very good! Snoozing is usually done during the day time. When you say that the conference was a 'snoozefest', what you're suggesting is that..."

"It put you to sleep. The papers presented were so boring that you found it difficult to stay awake."

"Very good! Here's another example. The speech given by the Minister was such a snoozefest that many people in the audience kept looking at their watch."

"I usually enjoy watching your favourite hero's movies. But the latest one proved to be a snoozefest. I just couldn't sit through it."

"Let's not talk about my favourite hero's movies. You'll only succeed in driving a wedge between the two of us."

"A what?"

"A wedge! W...e...d...g...e. Rhymes with the words, 'edge', 'sledge' and 'ledge'."

"I see. But what does 'wedge' mean?"

"Originally, it was an instrument or a tool that was made of a hard substance. Nowadays, a wedge mostly refers to the piece of wood or metal used to keep two things apart. It can also..."

"I see! So, when you say criticising your favourite actor will drive a wedge between us, what you mean is that it'll ruin our existing relationship. We'll no longer be friends."

"Very good. It'll sour our relationship."

upendrankye@gmail.com

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was founded on this day in 1863. A quiz on the organisation that ensures assistance for people affected by armed conflict

Radhika Santhanam

QUESTION 1

The ICRC was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1944 in 1945. Why was there a one-year delay?

QUESTION 2

This book proved decisive in the formation of the ICRC. It describes the Battle of Solferino. Name it.

QUESTION 3

The Assembly is the supreme governing body of the ICRC. Its members must all be ____ nationals. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 4

The ICRC has called this event its greatest failure. Name this event, which continues to dominate political discourse.

QUESTION 5

The ICRC has come under criticism several times in the recent past from a President. In a letter to the organisation, influential civil society members of this President's country also criticised the humanitarian body for not doing enough to help their country, which is at war. Name the country.

Visual question:

The Ottoman Empire used this symbol instead of the Red Cross in 1877-78. Why?

Questions and Answers to the February 14 edition of the daily quiz: 1. Name the three individuals who founded YouTube. **Ans: Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim**

2. This tech giant acquired YouTube in November 2006. **Ans: Google for $1.65 billion in stock**

3. This music video was the first to reach one billion views on YouTube. **Ans: PSY's 'Gangnam Style'**

4. The feat Indian record label T-Series holds. **Ans: On April 29, 2019, it became the first YouTube channel to reach 100 million subscribers**

5. This children's song video holds the current record of most views with more than 15.5 billion views and counting. **Ans: 'Baby Shark Dance'**

6. The online alias of Jimmy Donaldson. **Ans: 'MrBeast'**

7. The title of the longest video ever uploaded on YouTube (596.5 hours). **Ans: 'The Longest Video on YouTube: 596.5 Hours'**

8. The connection between the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and Janet Jackson's Super Bowl incident to YouTube. **Ans: Difficulty in finding videos of the two events led to the trio starting the video-sharing concept**

Visual: The title of the first-ever uploaded YouTube video. **Ans: 'Me At The Zoo' by Jawed Karim, one of the founders of YouTube**

Early Birds: Nobody got all the correct answers

Word of the day

Peripatetic:
a person who walks from place to place; traveling especially on foot

Synonym: wayfaring

Usage: *They are a group of peripatetic country preachers.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/peripateticpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˌpɛɹ.ɪ.pəˈtɛt.ɪk/, /ˌpɛɹ.ə.pəˈtɛt.ɪk/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

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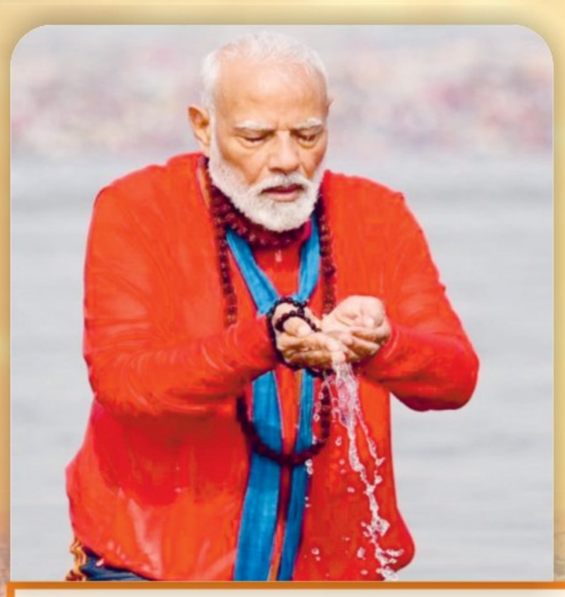


Divine-Grand-Digital Mahakumbh of Unity

THE SPIRIT OF MAHAKUMBH

FAITH, DEVOTION AND DIVINE EXPERIENCES

Mahakumbh is a living identity representing our legacy of the divine festival of our faith, spirituality and culture, every time, the mega event symbolises the divine gathering of religion, knowledge, devotion and art.

-Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

Mahakumbh 2025 marks a magnificent convergence of faith, culture, and spirituality, attracting millions worldwide, united in a solemn pledge to uphold India's unity and harmony. In the spirit of harmony and national pride, millions of devotees gathered at the Mahakumbh and took a solemn oath: "Hindustan will remain united." This grand affirmation of unity and solidarity resonated across the banks of the sacred Triveni Sangam, echoing the timeless values of India's rich cultural heritage. Dignitaries, spiritual leaders, and global icons joined devotees at Triveni Sangam, experiencing the divine energy of this historic event. With seamless arrangements and a spirit of unity, the grand festival symbolizes India's rich heritage and offers a transformative spiritual journey for all who partake.

"I felt truly blessed to take a holy dip at Triveni Sangam during Mahakumbh and pray for the nation's peace, prosperity, and happiness. Mahakumbh is a living symbol of India's rich cultural heritage, spreading a powerful message of unity and spirituality. I performed Dugdhabhishek and Aarti rituals at Sangam with my family. The sacred confluence of Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati is awe-inspiring, & witnessing thousands of devotees gathered here has been a deeply moving experience. This grand celebration of faith reflects the spirit and strength of our nation."

-Smt. Droupadi Murmu, President

"It is a privilege to take a holy dip at Triveni Sangam. The arrangements at Mahakumbh are excellent, and every facility has been meticulously managed. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, this event has truly become a global spiritual destination. I also had the opportunity to visit the Bade Hanuman Temple and the Gujarat Pavilion. The cultural representation and facilities, including the newly inaugurated 400-bed dormitory for devotees, are highly commendable."

Bhupendra Patel,
Chief Minister, Gujarat

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma, accompanied by Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav, took a holy dip at Triveni Sangam. Following the ritual, Rajasthan held a Cabinet meeting at Mahakumbh, becoming the second state after Uttar Pradesh to do so. Key decisions included raising temple ritual offerings, increasing part-time priests' honorarium to Rs. 7,500, and approving temple renovation funds. CM Sharma praised the event's arrangements and thanked PM Modi and UP CM Yogi Adityanath, calling Mahakumbh a true symbol of India's cultural heritage. Several ministers and dignitaries attended the event.

Bhajanlal Sharma,
Chief Minister, Rajasthan

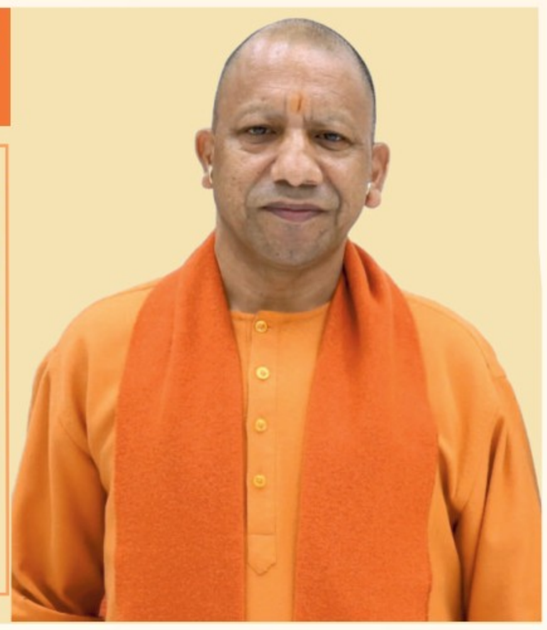
He took a holy dip at Triveni Sangam with his family, praying to Maa Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati. A "religious Mahaparva" and expressed gratitude for the sacred experience. Dhami assured that preparations for Haridwar's 2027 Kumbh are underway, promising it will be as grand and seamless as Prayagraj's. He also sought blessings from saints, emphasizing their role in guiding society. We move forward with their wisdom and blessings, pledging to ensure a historic Kumbh in Haridwar."

Pushkar Singh Dhami,
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

52.96 + CRORE PILGRIMS took holy dip till date

So far, over 50 crore devotees have taken a holy dip in the Triveni at the Mahakumbh, which is a living symbol of India's spirituality, unity, equality and harmony.Around 110 crore people out of India's total population are the followers of Sanatan Dharma. Out of that, over 50 crore taking a holy dip in the Sangam is a symbol of the strengthening faith in the great Sanatan."In the true sense, this is the Amritkaal of public faith of India.

-Yogi Adityanath
Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh



Upcoming Snan Date

Maha Shivaratri – 26th February, 2025

Unique And Unforgettable Experience

- Mahakumbh Mela Experience
- 8+ thematic zones with AR/VR technology
- Akhada Experience
- Laser Show
- Digital Kumbh Experience Centre
- Naga Akhara Experience
- Yoga, Pranayama and Meditation Sessions
- Cultural Mahakumbh Centre
- Robotics, Holograms, AR/VR Exhibition

Extensive Network of Medical & Public Utility Facilities

- More than 50 lakh people used 233 water ATM machines installed in the fair area for pure drinking water
- 10 digital khoya-paire centers set up in the fair area introduced more than 20,000 devotees separated from family members
- More than 6 lakhs people took medical assistance from central hospital and 42 other temporary hospitals. Blood pressure and sugar checks are highest in the fair area
- Examination of over 30 thousand hearing impaired people and distributed equipment for free
- In collaboration with National Medicose Organization and ALIMCO in Shravan Kumbh Camp organized by Social Welfare Department
- In the fair area, Rs 5 kg flour, Rs 6 kg rice and sugar distributed at the rate of Rs 18 per kg to Kalpavis and devotees from 138 fair price ration shops. Over 1,000 metric tonnes of ration distributed so far
- 43 temporary hospitals for emergency and routine medical care in Mela Area
- 381 doctors, 380 pharmacists, and 182 staff nurses deployed for efficient medical services

Mahakumbh Helplines

1920	112	1010	102,108	18004199139
Mahakumbh Mela Helpline	Emergency Service	Food and Civil Supplies Helpline	Ambulance Service	Railway Helpline

"Mahakumbh reflects the unity and magnificence of Sanatan culture. Unity is the core ideal of our tradition, where all differences fade, and every human is seen in their divine form. This gathering beautifully showcases how India's heritage and values bring people together with a shared sense of harmony and oneness."

Arif Mohammad Khan
Governor, Bihar

place of all pilgrimages. So the pleasure of having a holy dip here is achieved after the virtues of many births. I prayed here for the wellness of Madhya Pradesh's people, especially youth and fortune for every section of the society.

Mohan Yadav
Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh

"We are deeply moved by the divine grandeur and exceptional arrangements of Mahakumbh. This spiritual experience has fulfilled a lifelong dream. The Yogi government and the Government of India deserve immense gratitude for making it possible for us to be part of this sacred event. Bathing at the holy Sangam and performing rituals for our ancestors' salvation is a blessing beyond words. The seamless arrangements, cleanliness, and hospitality have left us overwhelmed. After years of longing, we feel spiritually fulfilled, and our ancestors' souls have found peace. This journey has been a dream come true."

Statement by
Devotees from
Pakistan at Mahakumbh

'Clarity on BJP State president's post by Feb. 20'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra on Sunday stated that there will be clarity on the State president's post by February 20, and that Central leaders will visit Karnataka soon for consultations in this regard.

Speaking to presspersons in Tumakuru, Mr. Vijayendra said the election of the new State president will be taken up after that of district units' presidents.

Pointing out that the process in this regard was happening in Delhi, he said the Central leaders were expected to visit Karnataka soon. "The leaders will take a final decision (on State president) after consultations with party legislators," he said.

Replying to queries on rebel leader Basanagouda R. Patil Yatnal refusing to reply to a show-cause notice issued by the Central disciplinary committee, he said: "The committee had issued the notice to him with a deadline of 72 hours to reply. But I will not comment on what happened later and what is happening now. The Central leadership is observing everything."

It may be noted that the BJP's internal tussle had reached a crucial stage as the rebel leaders have publicly opposed the candidature of Mr. Vijayendra for the presidential post. The Central leadership began the task of ensuring discipline by issuing the show-cause notice to Mr. Yatnal and also putting on hold the appointment of the Chickballapur district unit president, who is said to be a close aide of Mr. Vijayendra.

Taking serious exception to a decision by the Congress government to close down nine new universities that had been set up by the BJP government, Mr. Vijayendra said such a measure would affect students as well as the higher education sector.

Terming the closure of the universities as "unfortunate," he appealed to the government to reconsider its decision in the interest of students.

Deve Gowda has turned into Modi's cheerleader, says CM

Congress leaders slam the former Prime Minister for his 'inability' to protect Karnataka's interests by aligning with the BJP

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A day after former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda said that all three major political parties had to bury their differences to fight for Karnataka's share of waters from the Godavari river basin, the ruling Congress leaders slammed the veteran leader for his alleged inability to protect the State's interests by aligning with the BJP.

While the former Prime Minister had said that he was willing to set aside his political differences with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar to protect Karnataka's interests, the two Congress leaders on Sunday attacked him over his political alignment even as they said that they would cooperate with Mr. Gowda to fight for the State's rightful share of waters from the Godavari basin in the Godavari-Krishna-Cauvery interlinking project.

Urging Mr. Gowda to rise above politics to be a statesman, Mr. Siddaramaiah said: "You [Mr. Gowda] should work for the protection of the interests of Kannada-Kannadigas-Karnataka. Our support will be there for whatever efforts you make."

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah while welcoming former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda's call for a collective effort to get Karnataka's share of waters from the Godavari basin, attacked the JD(S) supremo over his political preferences. FILE PHOTO

Stating that people expected him to raise the issue of injustice to the State in the areas of irrigation, tax devolution, disaster relief, and railway projects, the Chief Minister said: "Mr. Gowda, who had stood up for the interests of Karnataka irrespective of which party was at the Centre earlier, had turned into a cheerleader of Prime Minister Narendra Modi now."

He said: "Citizens of Karnataka and I have observed that you had fought for justice for the State in the past. However, we are observing that you and your party are behaving like spokespersons of the Union government. People are asking if all this was needed to make your son a Union Minister."

Promising the State's cooperation with regard to the rivers interlinking project, Mr. Siddaramaiah said that before starting new projects, the State was expecting his cooperation in completing ongoing projects.

"Bengaluru citizens will remain indebted if you [Mr. Gowda] can get approval for the Mekedatu drinking water project. The Centre is still dilly-dallying on releasing funds announced for the Upper Bhadra project. Though the ₹51,148-crore Upper Krishna Stage III is ready, the Centre has refused to gazette the Krishna Tribunal Award citing a case in Supreme Court. Instead, it can convince the court and gazette the award to help irrigate the parched areas in north Karnataka. This will help us submit a proposal to declare it as a national project."

The approval for the Kalasa-Banduri project is still awaited from the Centre, he pointed out.

Mr. Shivakumar, who holds the Irrigation portfolio, took a dig at the Janata Dal (Secular) leader, and said: "We are committed to protecting the interests of the State when it comes to issues related to land and water. He [Mr. Gowda] had announced that he would get clearance for the Mekedatu project in one day. With respect to the Mahadayi project, I have met the Union Minister concerned. This is not his fight, but the fight of the State."

He told presspersons in Bengaluru: "He may have the habit of doing politics (in this issue). We do not indulge in politics and it's not necessary for us. We have seen how we were criticised when we were fighting on irrigation issues. We are working for the State's interests forgetting the past."

Mr. Shivakumar remarked: "Has he ever asked in Parliament as to why ₹5,000 crore announced for the Upper Bhadra project had not been released? I had expected that Mr. Gowda and Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy would raise the issue in Parliament, but they had failed."

The Deputy Chief Minister said that he would be happy if Mr. Gowda gets the rivers interlinking project done. "Whatever cooperation is needed we will extend. I will bow before him from here."

Kurubur airlifted to Bengaluru

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Farmers' leader and president of Karnataka Sugarcane Growers' Association Kurubur Shanthakumar on Sunday was brought in an air ambulance from Patiala in Punjab to Bengaluru. A note from the Chief Minister's Office said that Mr. Shanthakumar had met with an accident near Patiala.

He has now been admitted to Manipal Hospitals for further treatment.

Stop 'misusing' Siddaramaiah's name, DKS tells Cong. leaders

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Urging Congress leaders to stop "misusing" the name of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday said that there is no doubt about Mr. Siddaramaiah being the leader of the Congress.

"Do not misuse the name of Mr. Siddaramaiah daily. He is our leader. He is needed for all elections, from zilla panchayat and taluk panchayat to Assembly and Lok Sabha polls. The party has made him Chief Minister twice. He is doing good work after becoming the Chief Minister for the second time," Mr. Shivakumar told presspersons in a veiled attack on the Chief Minister's followers, who have been stepping up pressure on the Deputy Chief Minister.

Mr. Shivakumar's response came after his attention was drawn to statements from the Chief Minister's followers that he was indispensable to the party. "Do not make statements using his name that could become fodder for the media."

When asked if there was confusion in the Congress, he said no, and that the party was keeping a watch on daily developments.

L.R. Shivarame Gowda (centre), from the BJP, and Brijesh Kalappa, who was in the AAP, joining the Congress in the presence of KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar in Bengaluru on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

It may be noted that some of the followers of Mr. Siddaramaiah recently publicly demanded that he should be allowed to complete his full term as Chief Minister, so that there would be time for new leadership to emerge. Their statements had come in the wake of a speculated power sharing pact between the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister.

The KPCC president also said that dates have been asked from Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi to lay the foundation for 100 Congress offices. He also said that unless the land is registered in the name of the party, construction will not be taken up. "The building plan for the office to be constructed near Anand Rao Circle is also ready and foundation stone will be laid the same day."

Leaders join Congress

L.R. Shivarame Gowda, former MP, who was in BJP, and Brijesh Kalappa, who was in the AAP, joined the Congress on Sunday. In response to a question if more leaders were joining, Mr. Shivakumar said: "There is a long list. We have to decide about some inclusion after holding discussion with local leaders."

2.22 crore land records in State linked with Aadhaar

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

As many as 2.22 crore land records in Karnataka have been successfully linked with Aadhaar by the end of January.

A note from Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda on Sunday said that owing to the dedicated efforts of village administrative officers and village assistants, the Aadhaar linkage has been possible.

Recognising their efforts, as some even spent money from their own pockets, the State-level review and monitoring committee under the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme has decided that an honorarium of ₹1 will be provided per Aadhaar linkage.

Releasing the guidelines for making payment, the Minister said that fund release and payment process must be completed by February 21.

Under the Bhoosuraksha scheme, an amount of ₹4.45 crore has already been allocated.

CORRIDORS OF POWER

Palemar's influence still continues

Former Minister Krishna J. Palemar *(pictured)*, who is involved in real estate business, seems to be still wielding considerable influence in the civic affairs of the Mangaluru City Corporation.

Mr. Palemar represented the Mangaluru City South constituency more than a decade ago.

On February 1, 2025, the city corporation published a notification seeking objections from the public on naming a stretch of a newly-widened road, under the Smart City project, as 'Krishna Palemar' Road and naming of a newly developed circle as 'Gorakshanatha' Circle. In the council meeting on January 30, 2025, the MCC passed the proposal.

Interestingly, the proposal was cleared a few days after Mr. Palemar purchased a huge property, close to the newly laid circle. A cashew processing unit was located on the land and Mr. Palemar worked there during his younger days. After the purchase of property, Mr. Palemar named it as "Palemar Garden" and a BPO continued to function from a corner of the property.

The former Minister has been renting out the property for events.

The first was a function of the Mangaluru Press Club on February 2.

Enquiries in the MCC revealed that Mr. Palemar is keen on naming the stretch of road between Morgan's Gate Circle and Gorakshanatha Circle after him.

However, there is opposition to naming the road after Mr. Palemar.

B.C. Patil defends dynastic politics

Even as the BJP has been opposing the politics of dynasty, B.C. Patil, BJP leader and former Minister, has defended it, saying family politics is a natural phenomenon in Indian democracy. At a religious function in Davangere, Mr. Patil said that there was nothing wrong in dynastic politics. Family politics was common in all political parties. Just like in other professions, the children of politicians grow up as leaders and develop their desire to get elected to the Assembly or Parliament to serve society. The core issue is whether a leader is working for the party and takes every one along or not, Mr. Patil said.

Raghava M.
Rishikesh Bahadur Desai

IN THE COURT OF THE XIX ADDL. CITY CIVIL JUDGE AT BENGALURU
P & SC No. 45 of 2025

BETWEEN: 1. ROHAN W JOSHI, Son of late Waman Khando Joshi and Shanta Waman Joshi, aged about 63 years, Residing at Apartment No.301, Brigade Lavelle 2, Lavelle Road, Bangalore. **2. ASHWIN WAMAN JOSHI,** Son of late Waman Khando Joshi and Shanta Waman Joshi, aged about 56 years, residing at 14, Margon Road, Toronto, Ontario Canada M6P 3H4.... **PETITIONERS**
AND: NIL ... RESPONDENT

PUBLIC NOTICE/CITATION UNDER THE INDIAN SUCCESSION ACT, 1925

WHEREAS the Petitioners above named have made a petition to this Court under Section 372 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 for the grant of Succession Certificate in favour of the Petitioners, in respect of properties and assets of their mother late Smt. Shanta Vaman Joshi, who died intestate in Bengaluru on 22.06.2011.

Interested Parties are hereby summoned to appear before this Court (CCH-18) in person or through Pleader, duly instructed and able to answer all material questions relating to this petition, on the **06/03/2025** at **11:00 A.M.** to show cause against the Petitioners, failing which the matter will be proceeded with ex-parte.

a) Schedule A Item I - Bank Accounts Balances in each account to go to Petitioner No.1. b) Schedule A Item II - Fixed Deposits & Term Deposits Balances in each account to go to Petitioner No.1. c) Schedule A Item III & III(A)- Mutual Funds Balances to be transferred to & Savings Schemes Petitioner No.1. d) Schedule B Items I, II, III, IV, V & VI Dematerialized Shares, Co-operative society To be transferred to Petitioner No.1. shares, Equity Shares, Corporate Bonds, Insurance Policy and Alternative Assets.

SCHEDULE-A: I. BANK ACCOUNTS DETAILS

1. Savings Account No.01190012754 in State Bank of India, Nehru Nagar, Sheshadripuram Branch, Bengaluru. 2. Savings Account No. 07881019791 in Canara Bank, Madhavanagar, Kumarcot Layout Branch, Bengaluru. 3. Savings Account No. 0422101012064 in Canara Bank, K.P West Branch, Bengaluru. 4. Savings Account No. 0788101003424 in Canara Bank, Madhavanagar, Kumarcot Layout Branch, Bengaluru. 5. Savings Account No. 07881160000001 in Canara Bank, Madhavanagar, Kumarcot Layout Branch, Bangalore. 6. Savings Account No. 8075 in Canara Bank, Kumara Krupa Branch, Bengaluru. 7. Savings account No. 00091000067232 in HDFC Bank, Kasturba Gandhi Marg Branch, Bengaluru. 8. Savings Account No. SB 2349 in Syndicate Bank, Kumara Krupa Road, Bengaluru. 9. Account No. 60000853268 in Bank of Maharashtra, Bengaluru. 10. Account No. 1365 in Bank of Maharashtra, Malleshwaram Branch, Bengaluru. 11. Savings Bank Account No. 11271 at Visveswaraya Co-operative Bank limited. 12. Savings Account No. 0422017000021 in Kotak Bank, Bengaluru. 13. Savings Account No - SB2045342300 in Deutsche Bank in Bengaluru. 14. Savings Account No. 5121750807 in Citi Bank, Bengaluru. 15. Savings Account No. 078810105683 in Canara bank 16. Savings Account No. 01190010230 in State Bank of India. 17. Savings Account No. 16473 Canara bank

II. FIXED DEPOSITS & TERM DEPOSITS

SL.	DEPOSIT DETAILS	VALUE (INR)
1.	Deposit No. 0788424000042/1 in Canara Bank, Bengaluru	50,202.00
2.	Deposit No. 0788424000042/2 in Canara Bank, Bengaluru	95,272.00
3.	Deposit No. 0788404000749/1 in Canara Bank, Bengaluru	1,99,587
4.	Deposit No. 0788401003006/2 in Canara Bank, Bengaluru	1,79,707
5.	Deposit No. 0788401003005/2 in Canara Bank, Bengaluru	1,79,707
6.	Deposit No. 0788401001354/2 in Canara Bank, Bengaluru	4,14,891
7.	Kamadhenu Deposit Senior citizen in Canara Bank with DR.No. 0788404000444/3 with customer ID 2535290	5000
8.	Kamadhenu Deposit Senior Citizen in Canara Bank with DR.No. 07884040000316/2 with customer ID 2535299	7594
9.	Deposit in Kamadhenu Deposit Senior Citizen in Canara Bank with DR.No. 0422404000097/2	78600
10.	Deposit No. 0422404000909/1 in Canara Bank Bengaluru	50000
11.	Deposit in Kamadhenu Deposit General in Canara Bank with DR No. 07884010025519/1	5000
12.	Deposit No. 0422404000874/1 in Canara Bank with customer ID 2169990	56,835
13.	Deposit No. 0788404000750/1 in Canara Bank, Bengaluru	1,99,587
14.	Deposit No. 5021284 in Telco Dealers Leasing and Finance Company Ltd	16,168
15.	Deposit No. 0009441000 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	1,53,390
16.	Deposit No. 0094410006926 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	60,563.82
17.	Deposit No. 0094410006926 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	68,573.40
18.	Deposit No. 0094470042093 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	38,505.37
19.	Deposit No. 0094470042093 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	41,280.24
20.	Deposit No. 0094470042093 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	44,697.47
21.	Deposit No. 0094470042093 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	48,744.91
22.	Deposit No. 0094470042093 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	51,188.43
23.	Deposit No. 0094470042093 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	30,131.83
24.	Deposit No. 00094410008282 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	76,619
25.	Deposit No. 00094410015259 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	64,958.6
26.	Deposit No. 00094410015259 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 869510	82,906.82
27.	Deposit No. BL/680998 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 50215940	60,257
28.	Deposit No. BL/681009 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 50215940	60,094
29.	Deposit No. BL/681009 in HDFC Bank with customer ID 50215940	60,257
30.	Term Deposit No. KCC/01/010071 in Corporation Bank, Bengaluru	1,11,336
31.	Term Deposit No. 10323735537 in State Bank of India, Bengaluru	3,40,933
32.	Deposit No. RI/19665/2 at Visvesvaraya Co-operative Bank Ltd.	3,50,000
33.	Deposit No. RI/20089/2 in Visvesvaraya co-operative bank ltd with linked to customer ID 150303	50,000
34.	Deposit in A/c no. 201192015525 at ING Vysya Bank Limited at MG Road	1,89,500.37
35.	Deposit in A/c no. 201192015525 at ING Vysya Bank Limited linked at MG Road	1,63,223.59
36.	Deposit in A/c no. 201192015525 at ING Vysya Bank Limited at MG Road	1,47,331.88
37.	Deposit in A/c no. 201192015525 at ING Vysya Bank Limited at MG Road	1,32,896
38.	Deposit No. 0758885 with Bank of Maharashtra Bengaluru linked to A/c No. AF/2005	89,413
39.	Deposit No. 0758884 with Bank of Maharashtra Bengaluru linked to A/c No. AF/2005	89,413
40.	Deposit No. 0758883 with Bank of Maharashtra Bengaluru linked to A/c No. AF/2005	41,552
41.	Deposit No. 902290 with Bank of Maharashtra Bengaluru linked to A/c No. AG/2006	37,280
42.	Kamadhenu Deposit Senior citizen in Canara Bank with Dr No. 0422404000875/1 with customer ID 2169990	56,835
43.	Deposit No. 31090680748 in State Bank of India	10,000
44.	Deposit No. RI/18974/2 in Visvesvaraya co-operative bank ltd with linked to customer ID 117826.	39,044
45.	Deposit No. SCVCC 19410 in Syndicate Bank	86,092.67

II (A) Deposits with India Post: Value as on

1. Deposit in KVP No. 1247191889 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **2.** Deposit in KVP No. 1247191841 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **3.** Deposit in KVP No. 1247191865 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **4.** Deposit in KVP No. 1247192022 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **5.** Deposit in KVP No. 1247191926 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **6.** Deposit in KVP No. 1247191964 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **7.** Deposit in KVP No. 1247191902 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **8.** Deposit in KVP No. 1247191940 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **9.** Deposit in KVP No. 1247191988 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **10.** Deposit in KVP No. 1247191827 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **11.** Deposit in KVP No. 1247192008 with Department of Posts India 20,000. **12.** Deposit in KVP No. 91CD 767388 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **13.** Deposit in KVP No. 91CD 767389 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **14.** Deposit in KVP No. 91CD 767390 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **15.** Deposit in KVP No. 91CD 767391 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **16.** Deposit in KVP No. 91CD 767392 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **17** Deposit in KVP No. 91CD 767393 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **18.** Deposit in KVP No. 91CD 767394 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **19.** Deposit in KVP No. 91CD 767395 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **20.** Deposit in KVP No. 88CD 074752 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **21.** Deposit in KVP No. 88CD 074753 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **22.** Deposit in KVP No. 91CD 767386 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **23.** Deposit in KVP No. 91CD 767387 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **24.** Deposit in KVP No. 86EE 758814 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **25.** Deposit in KVP No. 86EE 758815 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **26.** Deposit in KVP No. 86EE 758816 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **27.** Deposit in KVP No. 86EE 758818 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **28.** Deposit in KVP No. 86EE 758819 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **29.** Deposit in KVP No. 86EE 758820 with Department of Posts India 10,000. **30.** Deposit in KVP No. 86EE 758821 with Department of Posts India 10,000

III. Mutual Funds & Saving Schemes

Sl. No.	Product Name	Amount Invested (in Rupees)	No. of Units
1.	Mutual Fund GN0086789, Canganga units linked to Canara Bank, Account No - SB 12064	1130/-	115.19
2.	Mutual Fund GN0086789, Canganga units linked to Canara Bank, Account No - SB 12064	10735/-	1130
3.	Canbank Mutual Fund 000000009500	1,13,63/-	999.3843
4.	Canbank Mutual Fund Account no. 0009170 Folio Number Soo8640		1000
5.	UTI Mutual Fund - UTI Equity Tax Savings Plan (Income Payout) Folio No:3016508761	25,000/-	1647.989
6.	Franklin India TAXShield -IDCW Folio No: 17090923	25,000/-	754.546
7.	DSP Merril Lynch Opportunities Fund -Dividend Regulate Mutual Fund; Folio No: 1300391/70	10,00,000/-	25,887.957
8.	Unit Trust of India - Reg Folio No: MF 351958 with ID No. 75200943		No. of Shares 2850

III (A) NATIONAL SAVINGS CERTIFICATE NO.

Sl. No.	Details	No. of Shares
1.	National Savings Certificate No. 68CC 606829	1000
2.	National Savings Certificate No.68CC 606823	1000
3.	National Savings Certificate No. 68CC 606824	1000
4.	National Savings Certificate No. 68CC 606825	1000
5.	National Savings Certificate No. 68CC 606826	1000
6.	National Savings Certificate No. 68CC 606827	1000
7.	National Savings Certificate No. 68CC 606828	1000
8.	National Savings Certificate No. 68CC 606830	1000
9.	National Savings Certificate No. 68CC606831	1000
10.	National Savings Certificate No. 68CC 606832	1000
11.	National Savings Certificate No. 55DD 733420	5000
12.	National Savings Certificate No. 78EE 882591	10000
13.	National Savings Certificate No. 86EE 718534	10000
14.	National Savings Certificate No. 86EE 718535	10000
15.	National Savings Certificate No. 86EE 718536	10000
16.	National Savings Certificate No. 86EE 718537	10000
17.	National Savings Certificate No. 91EE 142255	10000
18.	National Savings Certificate No. 91EE 142256	10000
19.	National Savings Certificate No. 91EE 142257	10000
20.	National Savings Certificate No.91EE 142258	10000
21.	National Savings Certificate No. 91EE 142253	10000
22.	National Savings Certificate No. 91EE 142254	10000
23.	National Savings Certificate No. 56DD 878437	5000
24.	National Savings Certificate No. 56DD 878439	5000
25.	National Savings Certificate No. 56DD 878440	5000
26.	National Savings Certificate No. 78EE 007886	10000
27.	National Savings Certificate No. 78EE 007887	10000
28.	National Savings Certificate No. 78EE 007888	10000
29.	National Savings Certificate No. 56DD 878438	10000
30.	National Savings Certificate No. 86EE 758814	10000
31.	National Savings Certificate No. 86EE 758815	10000
32.	National Savings Certificate No. 86EE 758816	10000
33.	National Savings Certificate No. 86EE 758818	10000
34.	National Savings Certificate No. 86EE 758819	10000
35.	National Savings Certificate No.86EE 758820	10000
36.	National Savings Certificate No. 86EE 758821	10000

SCHEDULE-B
I. DEMATERIALISED SHARES IN KOTAK SECURITIES BANK
DP ID: IN300214 Client ID: 13136452

Sl.	ISIN Code	Company Name	No. of Shares	Value as on (INR)
1.	INE373A01013	BASF INDIA LIMITED	67	1,52,465/-
2.	INE085A01013	CHAMBAL FERTILIZERS AND CHEMICALS LIMITED	200	52,820/-
3	INE259A01022	COLGATE-PALMOLIVE (INDIA) LIMITED	100	1,50,735/-
4.	INE230A01023	EIH Limited	877	1,45,275.05/-
5.	INE159A01016	GLAXOSMITHKLINE PHARMACEUTICALS LIMITED	144	1,90,764/-
6.	INE234A01025	NOVARTIS INDIA LIMITED	150	84,555/-
6.	INE013A01015	RELIANCE CAPITAL LIMITED	5	40/-
7.	INE330H01018	RELIANCE COMMUNICATIONS LIMITED	114	142.50/-
8.	INE217K01011	RELIANCE HOME FINANCE LIMITED	5	12.50/-
9.	INE002A01018	RELIANCE INDUSTRIES LIMITED	456	10,62,958.08/-
10.	INE036A01016	RELIANCE INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED	7	1009.75/-
11.	INE614G01033	RELIANCE POWER LIMITED	28	278.60/-
12.	INE155A01022	TATA MOTORS LIMITED	2235	9,40,488/-
13.	INE032A01023	THE BOMBAY DYEING AND MANUFACTURING CO LTD	700	39.725/-
14.	INE245A01021	TATA POWER COMPANY LTD	1000	1,90,250/-

II. Co-operative Society Shares

Sl.No.	Co-operative Society	Details
1.	The Bangalore Legal Practitioners' Co-operative Society Ltd.	Certificate No.2000
2.	The Bangalore Legal Practitioners' Co-operative Society Ltd.	Additional Certificate No. 2000

III. SHARE CERTIFICATES

Sl. No.	Name of the Company	Details	No. of Shares
1.	Reliance Natural Resources Limited	RL NO: 02591916	12
2.	Reliance Natural Resources Limited	RL NO: 02591918	102
3.	Reliance Natural Resources Limited	RL NO: 02591926	88
4.	Reliance Natural Resources Limited	RL NO: 02591927	330
5.	Reliance Capital Ventures	RL NO: 02591916	12
6.	Reliance Capital Ventures	RL NO: 02591918	102
7.	Reliance Capital Ventures	RL NO: 02591926	88
8.	Reliance Capital Ventures	RL NO: 02591927	330
9.	Reliance Communication Ventures Limited	RL NO: 02591916	12
10.	Reliance Communication Ventures Limited	RL NO: 02591918	102
11.	Reliance Energy Ventures Limited	RL NO: 02591916	12
12.	Reliance Energy Ventures Limited	RL NO: 02591918	102

IV. CORPORATE BONDS

Sl.	ISIN Code	Company Name	Number of Units
1.	Investor ID No. 217434319 Bond certificate No. 39386666	UTI	469
2.	Investor ID: 75201133 Bond Certificate No: 13306559	6.75% Tax Free US64 Bonds	24
3.	Investor ID: 75201133 Bond Certificate No: 13306567	6.75% Tax Free US64 Bonds	66
4.	Investor ID: 75201133 Bond Certificate No: 13306559	6.75% Tax Free US64 Bonds	66

V. INSURANCE POLICY: 1. Policy details LIC Policy No. 611002866 2. LIC Policy No 610728692
IV. ALTERNATIVE ASSETS: Locker and Lien on Locker at State Bank of India, Kumara Krupa West associated with Account No. 31090680748
Given under my hand and seal of the court on this 14/02/2025
By order of the Court, Senior Sheristedar, City Civil Court, Bengaluru
Advocate for Petitioner: **QL PARTNERS**
No.3578, in Ward No. 72, 13th G Main, Service Road, HAL 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560 008

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

FIRST YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Sri. R. Krishnamurthy, M.Sc(Ag.)
(Retd. Agri. Chemist , TN Agri. Dept. and Freelancer, THE HINDU)
FONDLY REMEMBERED BY
Near & Dear

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

"I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine" Song 6:3

J R Daisy Elizabeth
04.07.1952 - 17.02.2024
W/o B Anbalagan
Lingering Memory of
Daisy-'My Super Amma'
Your powerful prayer life and resilience is an inspiration to our spiritual life forever.
Daughters, grandsons and relatives

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER
(only through KPP-Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered Contractors for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (WWM-West) 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K. G. Road, Bangalore-560009.

Sl. No	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to Tender / EMD Amount	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & Time for Opening of Tender
1.	(WWM-STP) K&T VALLEY	BWSSB/EE(WWM-STP) K & T /AE/660/2024-25 Date: 06.02.2025 (2nd Call)	Rs. 15,57,504/- / Rs. 38,938/-	03.03.2025 upto 4:00 pm.	04.03.2025 at 4:05 pm.
			Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-STP) K & T Valley		
2.	(WWM-STP) C. VALLEY	BWSSB/EE(WWM-STP) CV/PB/513/2024-25 Date: 07.02.2025	Rs. 53,12,614/- / Rs. 1,06,260/-	04.03.2025 upto 4:00 pm.	06.03.2025 after 5:00 pm.
			Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-STP) C Valley		

The detail regarding the tender & participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the abovesigned office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/5072/SSC/2024-25

Bengaluru metro's fare hike fiasco and backlash from commuters

How does the Namma Metro fare hike impact commuters? What is the justification for the fare hike by BMRCL? How did the public react to the increase? How have fare hike issues triggered political fallout? All of this led to a fare revision by BMRCL, making the overall fare hike by Namma Metro a disaster

EXPLAINER

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

Adding to commuter concerns, BMRCL has also removed discounts for QR code users. Now, only smart card users will get a discount, though at a reduced rate of 5%. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

Members of the Bengaluru Metro Commuters' Association protest against Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited at Freedom Park, demanding a rollback of Namma Metro fare hike, on February 15. K. MURALI KUMAR

Story so far

In a major setback for public transport users, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) announced a steep hike in Namma Metro fares on February 9, drawing widespread criticism from commuters and mobility experts. The fare increase, which in some cases neared 100%, triggered a political tussle between the ruling Congress and the opposition BJP, with both parties blaming each other for the move.

Following public outcry, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah intervened on February 13, directing BMRCL Managing Director M. Maheshwar Rao to roll back 'abnormal' fare hikes. In response, BMRCL revised its decision, capping the maximum stage-wise fare increase at 71%. However, the base fare and the highest ticket price remain unchanged at ₹10 and ₹90, respectively, as originally announced.

How does the Namma metro raise fare?

Close on the heels of the Karnataka government announcing a 15% hike in bus fares, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) on February 9 announced a fare hike for Namma Metro. The revised fare structure came into effect the following day, significantly increasing travel costs for metro commuters.

Under the new structure, the maximum fare has increased from ₹60 to ₹90, while the minimum fare for the shortest distance (0-2 km) remains at ₹10. However, fares for the 2-4 km distance have risen from ₹15 to ₹20, and for distances beyond 30 km, passengers now have to pay ₹90. This marks the first fare revision in over seven years.

Adding to commuter concerns, BMRCL has also removed discounts for QR code users. Now, only smart card users will get a discount, though at a reduced rate of 5%. The minimum balance requirement for smart cards has also been raised from ₹50 to ₹90. However, smart card users can avail of an additional discount of 5% during off-peak hours, totalling 10% for those avoiding rush hours. Off-peak hours are defined as before 8 a.m., between 12 p.m. and 4 p.m., and after 9 p.m. on weekdays. Additionally, a 10% discount will be available on all Sundays and national holidays.

The fare revision also extends to tourist and group tickets. The new rates for one-day, three-day, and five-day passes are now ₹300, ₹600, and ₹800, respectively.

What is the justification for the fare increase by BMRCL?

BMRCL stated that the fare hike follows recommendations from a fare fixation committee (FFC), formed by the Union government on September 7, 2024, and chaired by a former High Court judge. The committee submitted its report on December 16, suggesting a fare revision based on operational costs, passenger feedback, and expert consultations.

BMRCL Managing Director M. Maheshwar Rao said the FFC had recommended hikes of up to 105.15%, leading to an average increase of 51.5% (6.87% YoY). However, the final revision was lower than the 14.02% YoY hike BMRCL had initially sought.

How did the public react to the increase?

The fare hike sparked widespread dissatisfaction among daily commuters, many of who voiced their frustration on social media. Some commuters reported paying nearly double the previous fares for their regular routes.

Commuters argued that the fare hike would push low-income passengers back to private vehicles, worsening traffic congestion–the very issue that metro services were meant to address.

Critics pointed out that despite Bengaluru Metro spanning only 76 km, the maximum fare now stands at ₹90, while the 353 km Delhi Metro charges only ₹60 for journeys beyond 32 km.

Adding to the debate, BMRCL cited Section 37 of the Metro Railway Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Act, 2002, stating that the FFC's fare recommendations are binding. However, some pointed to Tamil Nadu's decision in 2021, when then-Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami reduced Chennai Metro fares despite similar recommendations.

Fare hike triggers a political slug fest

The fare hike has led to political sparring between the ruling Congress and the opposition BJP. BJP leaders, including Basavanagudi MLA Ravi Subramanya, submitted a memorandum to BMRCL demanding a rollback. Subramanya criticised the Congress government, saying, "BMRCL is not here to generate profit; it is a public transport system meant to serve the people. The Congress government is burdening citizens by increasing fares. They have raised the prices of essential commodities, and now public transport fares are soaring."

The Congress, however, blamed the fare hike on the BJP-led central government. Karnataka Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said, "BMRCL revised fares based on recommendations from the fare fixation committee constituted by the BJP-led Centre. Let the BJP explain who is truly responsible."

Amid the political tussle, both BJP and Congress workers staged protests at metro stations across the city demanding a rollback of the fare hike.

Why the Karnataka CM was forced to intervene

Amid mounting pressure, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on February 13 directed BMRCL to roll back the "abnormal" fare hikes. "The way BMRCL has implemented the fare revision has led to anomalies, with fares more than doubling in some sections," he wrote on social media platform X. "I have asked the MD of BMRCL to urgently address these issues and reduce fares where increases are abnormal."

This statement was in contrast to his earlier claim that the Karnataka government had no control over BMRCL's fare decisions, as the metro body operates autonomously under a 50:50 partnership between the State and Centre.

How did BMRCL revise the fare hike?

Following the Chief Minister's directive, BMRCL announced a revision the same day, capping the maximum stage-wise fare increase at 71%. Managing Director Maheshwar Rao, in a press conference, said the recalibrated fare slabs would take effect by February 14, benefitting around 46% of metro commuters (approximately 2.91 lakh daily passengers).

Rao acknowledged that technical errors had affected the fare calculation and announced a revision of the fare structure.

"This revision aligns with the spirit of the Fare Fixation Committee's recommendations while addressing commuter concerns," Rao said. However, during the press conference, he struggled to provide clear explanations regarding the fare structure, using a whiteboard to illustrate calculations that many journalists found confusing.

By February 14, the revised fares were implemented. Many commuters noticed reductions of ₹9 to ₹10 on some routes, though the base fare of ₹10 and the highest fare of ₹90 remained unchanged.

What are experts saying about fare increase?

Transportation experts condemned BMRCL's handling of the fare hike. Ashish Verma, convenor of IISc's Sustainable Transportation Lab, dismissed the explanation of technical glitches, stating, "BMRCL must take accountability. Why has the Fare Fixation Committee report not been made public? Transparency is crucial for a public transport service."

Transportation expert M.N. Srihari called the hike "unscientific and poorly planned," arguing that fare revisions should be gradual rather than abrupt. "Public transport fare hikes should be limited to 10-15%. BMRCL had not revised fares for eight years. Instead of periodic increases, they suddenly imposed a 100% hike, which is unacceptable."

Srihari emphasised that the success of Bengaluru's metro hinges on its ability to balance financial sustainability with public welfare. "While fare adjustments are sometimes necessary to maintain operations, the recent hike has raised concerns about affordability and accessibility for the city's diverse population. If public transport becomes too expensive, it risks losing its role as a crucial mode of daily commute, ultimately defeating its purpose," he added.

Is the fare hike revision citing rising costs justified?

BMRCL officials defended the fare hike citing increased operational costs and mounting debt. Staff expenses, which constitute 61% of operational costs, have surged by 42% since 2017, while energy costs have risen by 34% due to higher electricity tariffs. Maintenance and administrative expenses saw the sharpest rise–366%–now accounting for 20% of total operational costs, according to a statement by BMRCL after revision of fare.

Beyond operational costs, BMRCL faces significant loan repayment obligations. In 2024-25, it is set to repay ₹647.66 crore in loans and ₹122.94 crore in interest, with total liabilities reaching ₹770.60 crore. By 2029-30, loan repayments are projected to exceed ₹1,457 crore, with interest payments of ₹1,319 crore, taking the total burden to ₹2,776.58 crore.

How the fare raise affected Bengaluru Metro's daily ridership?

The ridership data for Namma Metro shows a noticeable decline after February 9, when BMRCL implemented a fare hike. Before the fare increase (from February 2 to 7), the average daily boarding count was 8,44,899, with the highest being 8,70,687 on February 7. However, post-fare hike (from February 9 to 14), the average daily ridership dropped to 7,51,560, with a sharp decline on February 9 itself (6,23,123), the lowest recorded during this period. This indicates an immediate impact on commuter behaviour, as many may have opted for alternative transport options due to higher fares.

While ridership recovered slightly after the initial dip, it did not return to pre-hike levels, suggesting a sustained effect, according to Srihari.

The decline is particularly significant considering that weekdays usually see higher commuter numbers, yet the post-hike weekday figures (February 10 to 14) remained lower than the pre-hike period. "This drop could put pressure on BMRCL to reassess the fare structure. If this trend continues, it could impact revenue projections, as lower ridership may offset the gains from increased fares," he added.

However, Srihari emphasises that at least a month's data is needed to determine whether the fare hike has had a significant impact on metro ridership, as short-term fluctuations may not provide a clear picture of long-term commuter behaviour.

Bengaluru Metro daily ridership data 2025

Before fare hike	After fare hike
February 2: 637,884 boardings	February 9: 623,123 boardings
February 3: 870,147 boardings	February 10: 828,149 boardings
February 4: 858,417 boardings	February 11: 778,774 boardings
February 5: 867,660 boardings	February 12: 762,811 boardings
February 6: 864,601 boardings	February 13: 751,251 boardings
February 7: 870,687 boardings	February 14: 763,250 boardings

The monkey and Shakespeare, and why the twain won't meet

Research has worked out that the time it would take for a monkey to write Shakespeare would be longer than the lifespan of our universe

ABOUT 500 WORDS

Suresh Menon

There is, apparently, a five per cent chance that a chimp might type the word 'bananas' in its lifetime. AFP

There is a rite of passage in life that has been generally ignored. I was told when I was a child that beating your father at chess was a sign that you were now a grown up. There are other measures too, obviously. The journey from childhood to adulthood is often accompanied by, in fact, hastened by the realisation that stuff we were taught at school was wrong.

Take that bit about the three angles of a triangle adding up to 180 degrees, for example. After we leave junior school we are told that sometimes, in other geometries, the angles could add up to less or more than 180 degrees. We know that the shortest path between two points on earth is not a straight line, but a geodesic (which is defined as the shortest path between two points on earth).

With such realisation comes another - that maturity is fast approaching. And now comes the clincher. The annihilation of the infinite monkey theorem. We were told that given enough time, a monkey pressing keys on a typewriter would eventually write the complete works of Shakespeare. It was a comforting thought, suggesting you or I could have written Hamlet, but Shakespeare got there first because he had oodles of time on his hands. How nice to know that any monkey could have written Macbeth.

Most comforting of all was the implication that randomness and uncertainty rule our lives, and all attempts at predictability, through religion, philosophy or indeed mathematics were futile.

Now two Sydney-based researchers tell us that there is certainty and predictability in the infinite monkey problem. Their research has worked out that the time it would take for a monkey to write Shakespeare would be longer than the lifespan of our universe.

Even if every simian in the world were commissioned at this moment to do the job and typed at the rate of one second per key till the end of the universe, they wouldn't complete the job. It's official now - your favourite chimp at the zoo will never surprise you by typing out Henry IV or Richard III in their spare time.

There is, apparently, a five percent chance that a chimp might type the word 'bananas' in its lifetime. The probability of writing a random sentence - such as "two bees or not two bees stung me" is one in ten followed by 24 zeroes. Forget chimps, even humans will find it difficult to put a name to that number.

The universe dies not of boredom while waiting for the chimp to finish at least one play by Shakespeare, but because of the Big Chill - the opposite of the Big Bang - which signifies the end of the universe.

According to an AI source, the word 'monkey' never occurs in any of Shakespeare's works. Now we know the word 'Shakespeare' is unlikely to occur in any monkey's work. So here we are back to asserting the uniqueness of the individual, and reaffirming that man is the centre of the universe.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 17, 1975

Political Parties Urged to Keep off Teachers and Students

Bangalore, Feb. 16: The Vice Chancellor of Bangalore University, Dr. Narasimhaiah, suggested here today that the political parties in the country should come to a mutual understanding that they would desist from making use of teachers and students, for their political ends.

Inaugurating the Federation of University and College Teachers' Associations in Karnataka at the Government Arts College and auditorium , here today, Dr. Narasimhaiah said that such an understanding would go a long way in clearing the polluted atmosphere of academic life and lessen students' unrest and campus agitations.

He called on university and college teachers to create an environment favourable for the maintenance of academic excellence and high educational standards. He said that there had been a tremendous expansion of university education in the country in general and in Karnataka in particular. But unfortunately, this development was only quantity wise and not quality wise. As for the problems of university and college teachers, he said the Government should tackle them without delay.

We want it that way.... Backstreet Boys at the 2019 iHeartRadio Music Awards in Los Angeles in 2019 and (below) Nick Carter at Bengaluru's ZLB23. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Nick Carter's back, Alright!

Musician Nick Carter of the Backstreet Boys who was in Bengaluru as part of his 'Who I Am' world tour, talks about his life, music and work

ANURAG TAGAT

Coming in from a Backstreet Boys concert in Saudi Arabia, Nick Carter walks into ZLB23 at the Leela Palace just as the house band is playing a jazzy rendition of *Everybody (Backstreet's Back)*. "I've never heard our music played that way before, but it was really good," he comments.

Wearing a denim jacket with a T-shirt and jeans, the pop star sits down on the biggest couch in the speakeasy, but not before introducing himself to all the media persons present with a big smile.

Nick performed a solo set at Indiranagar Club on February 9 as part of his 'Who I Am' world tour, which is heading on to South Asia this month. Then in March, the tour brings the Backstreet Boys founder back to India for performances in Kolkata, Siliguri, Shillong and Goa. He says towards the end of the interaction, "I'm here, and I love it here, and there's going to be more shows. So let this be the beginning of a bigger, more fruitful career out here."

The singer says this globe-trotting tour started out soon after Backstreet Boys completed their DNA tour which had, incidentally, also stopped by India in mid-2023. He says, "We've done over 100 shows worldwide on the Who I Am tour. I've gone everywhere – I started in North America, and then went to Europe, and South America, finishing up in Southeast Asia, and India. The Who I am tour is a story of my life in a lot of ways."

A performer right from his adolescent years, Nick now 45, says the set-list on these shows starts off by paying tribute to the music he loves – 1980s hit songs including 'Don't You (Forget About Me)' by Simple Minds (made famous in the coming-of-age film *The Breakfast Club*) in 1985.

"After that, we transition into Backstreet Boys music, because that's when my life changed, and I started making music for our fans. Then we also do a little bit of solo music, but the main part of the show is to tell a story with the music of my life in a lot of ways. It's almost as if you were watching a movie with a script," he says.

While fans may clamour for a Backstreet Boys concert in Bengaluru, Nick says it's "a little harder" to bring the full group down when compared to his solo project. "I have a little more control over where I go as an individual," he says.

Nick talks about being a fan of Indian culture and particularly, its food. "I think it's the best in the world," he beams.

He does express a desire to collaborate with Indian artistes. While he does not have any specific names in mind from the country's pop industry or singer-songwriter scene, he says anyone who reaches out via social media could catch his attention.

> I'm here, and I love it here, and there's going to be more shows. So let this be the beginning of a bigger, more fruitful career out here.
> NICK CARTER

Nick is seeking artistes for what are the final few songs part of his upcoming solo album. It follows his 2023 singles, 'Hurts To Love You' (written for his late brother Aaron Carter) and 'Superman', which was written to reflect upon the highs and lows in his life. "The new solo album is done right now, and I have got a couple more songs I'm going to do. It's one of the best little albums I've ever done."

Nick juggles this tour, a new album and the demanding role of a family man as a father to three children with his wife Lauren Kitt. Looking back at his life, he says, "I've been able to withstand the test of time and that's been really great. I think as I'm older now and as a father with three children, my life has changed." The singer goes on to quickly add that his life has changed for the better and more so as a musician and songwriter.

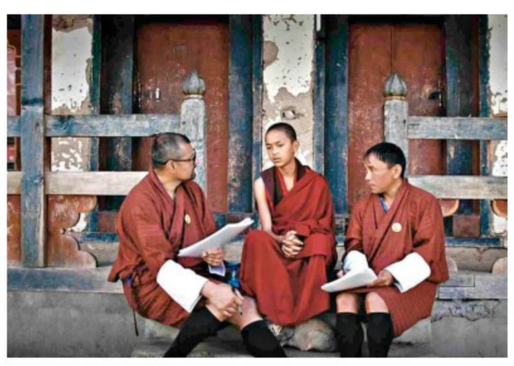
Between the returning demand for boy bands like Backstreet Boys and his solo pop songs, Nick has found himself in the midst of several lawsuits and allegations, besides grieving the loss of his brother Aaron in 2022. Although not specifically asked about any of these aspects, he sums up his journey so far as one that has brought resilience in him. "It's about being strong through it."

The singer says the place where he is at in his life inspires him to stay strong and draw from it for his music. His advice to musicians is to regard essential aspects such as social media as integral, but "don't get lost in the machine" that is the music industry's expectations of sale-ability.

CITYBEATS

Flair for the art

ONGOING
Sublime Galleria has an exhibition titled 'Nature's Symphony' by artist Mallika Vijay.
Her works are inspired by her interest in spirituality, nature and meditative energies. She is into stylised acrylic paintings using mixed media and focuses on self-expression, personal growth and sheer joy of creating. *On at Sublime Galleria, UB City, till March 14. Entry fee is ₹50 per person.*



A happy story

FEBRUARY 19
Vikalp Bengaluru, in collaboration with Bangalore International Centre (BIC), will screen the film *Agents of Happiness*. The 90-minute film, in Nepali and Dzongkha with English subtitles, is directed by Arun Bhattarai and Dorottya Zurbó and is produced by Arun Bhattarai, Máté Vince, Noémi Veronika Szakonyi. Arun will participate in a virtual conversation after the screening.
At 6.30pm at BIC. Entry is free.

An opera from the ages

Fusion feat The production bridged vast cultural and historical distances through masterful performances. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Charumathi Supraja

Like many love stories, the saga of Dido and Aeneas is complex and tragic. Rooted in classical mythology, referencing two epics (a minor character in Homer's *Iliad*, Aeneas plays protagonist in Virgil's *Aeneid*) and populated by gods masquerading as mortals (Aeneas is son of Grecian love goddess Aphrodite while Dido, the powerful Queen of Carthage, is compared to Roman goddess Diana) – the narrative brings alive larger-than-life characters. Written as an opera by Henry Purcell, in the Baroque period, Dido and Aeneas, even after 300-odd years, remains one of the most-performed English operas.

Yet, for anyone unlettered in Western music and operas, the title 'Dido and Aeneas' could conjure images of togas, tie-up sandals and impenetrable Latin verses set to song. Nothing could be further from the version of Dido and Aeneas that recently held a packed audience in thrall at the Bangalore International Centre (BIC). This production, by the Legato School of Music (in collaboration with The Swedish Arts Council and others), sported a resplendent Indian aesthetic that included Kanjeevaram silks, ornate lehengas, pastel kurtas and even Heer-Ranjha-esque costume touches such as bridal dupattas and block-printed overcoats. Featuring internationally accomplished musicians, two choirs – Capella Bangalore and The Bangalore Men – dancers from The Lewis Foundation of Classical Ballet and an orchestra (complete with violin, viola, cello, bass, keyboard and percussion), the production bridged vast cultural and historical distances through masterful performances.

This is not to say that the opera did not take tuning in – beginning as it does in the middle of many stories and revealing plot and form, simultaneously. Yet, the converging of many artistic genres and elements such as ballet, orchestral and vocal music, epic poetry and visual art to name some, facilitated ease in getting on board. The audience was made privy to conversations between handmaiden Belinda (essayed by Tanisha Herbert Rozario whose soprano voice struck awe) and the queen Dido, played by Swedish vocal coach Maria Forsstrom, whose mezzo-soprano voice anchored the opera. (Maria Forsstrom also played a key role in the training and rehearsal processes). The audience witnessed the trysts and turns of fate – expressed through spectacularly delivered music by the two choirs and the orchestra. Aeneas, the Trojan warrior fleeing a lost battle, was engagingly played by Rahul Bharadwaj. The evil unleashed by the sorceress crackled and sparkled through the stage persona (and clear, soprano voice) of Sangita Santosham, who was effectively supported by Rebekah Alexander and Ketki Herlekar playing the witches.

Jonas Olsson, Director of Capella Bangalore and The Bangalore Men, describes the opera, in general, as "a feast for the eyes, ears and soul," as it blends "solo singing, choir, acting, costumes and instrumental music".

He believes the Baroque opera has remained relevant "because of the quality of the music and the human desire for timeless beauty". Specifically of Dido and Aeneas he says, "It's an opera close to my heart. I performed in it the first time 25 years ago in Sweden, and was keen to bring it to Bengaluru. The format is perfect – many choir pieces, a smaller chamber orchestra and solo parts that aren't overly challenging. It is also amazing music for the audience to enjoy"

"The Baroque opera's emphasis on storytelling, expressive arias and emotional intensity has ensured its lasting influence on classical and modern music," says Abishek Gnanaraj, founder and director, Legato School of Music. "Widely celebrated for its beautiful arias, dramatic intensity and relatively short duration," *Dido and Aeneas* makes for "an ideal introduction to the Baroque opera both for audiences and performers, while its themes of love, betrayal, and destiny resonate across cultures."

A long rehearsal process began in June last year with musicians, choirs, soloists and dancers working separately, till a couple of weeks ahead of the concert. Though "introducing opera to an unfamiliar audience posed challenges", international and local artistes combined forces with the intent to deliver "a rendition of Dido and Aeneas that would be emotionally compelling and musically precise," says Abishek.

Conducted by Sofia Winiarski, Dido and Aeneas on the stage of BIC was marked by much cross-cultural collaboration.

Police file murder case as ex-Goa MLA dies after altercation

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Lavoo Mamlatdar

The Belagavi police have registered a case of murder against an autorickshaw driver following the death of Lavoo Suryaji Mamlatdar, 68, a former MLA from Goa, in Belagavi on Saturday.

Ameer Sohail, 26, alias Mujahid Shakeel, has been charged with deadly assault leading to the death of the former MLA. The former legislator died following an altercation with the driver over a minor accident. The accused has been arrested and a court remanded him in judicial custody.

Officers of the Market police station registered a first information report based on a complaint by Adiveppa Karilingannanavar, an eyewitness.

Mamlatdar had served as a Deputy Superintendent of Police in Goa before entering politics. He used to regularly visit Belagavi for shopping and other work. On Sunday, he had driven his car from Goa. Family members of the deceased arrived in Belagavi on Sunday evening, met police officers and took back the body after post-mortem.

Road rage

The accused, a resident of Subhash Nagar in Belagavi, had attacked the Congress leader following suspicion that the leader's car had hit his autorickshaw and damaged it. He demanded that Mamlatdar pay a hefty compensation amount on the spot. However, Mamlatdar refused citing minimal damage.

When the driver began arguing, Mamlatdar advised him to file a case for damage. In a fit of rage, the accused beat him up. Mamlatdar, who was going to his hotel room, collapsed on the steps. Hotel staff rushed him to the district hospital where he was declared brought dead.

The FIR says that the accused attacked the former MLA with the intention to murder him. "He dealt a few blows to his face and ears and the victim suffered internal injuries," a police officer said.

Abdul Rafiq, president of the Belgaum auto drivers' association, clarified that the accused is a taxi driver, not an auto driver. He expressed concern that labelling him as such would tarnish the reputation of Belagavi's auto drivers, which he deemed unacceptable. The FIR, however, identifies Ameer Sohail as an auto driver.

Abhay Patil, BJP MLA from Belagavi south, has alleged that law and order had collapsed in Karnataka under the Congress government.

Bouquets, brickbats for Tharoor over his start-up comment

Ruling LDF praises him for highlighting Kerala's 'stupendous' growth; UDF says he is 'parroting government propaganda without reality check'

G. Anand
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Shashi Tharoor, denying he had painted Kerala as a utopian polity, highlighted the State's burgeoning debt and agrarian crisis. ANI

Congress Working Committee (CWC) member Shashi Tharoor, MP, has received praise from the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) for highlighting Kerala's 'stupendous' growth in the start-up sector, while facing intense flak from the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) Opposition for "parroting the government propaganda without a reality check".

Evidently caught in the vortex of a seemingly snowballing controversy, Mr. Tharoor rushed to disentangle himself from the knotty dispute. In a Facebook post on Sunday, he said the latest Global Start-Up Ecosystem Report (2024) informed his comment published in a newspaper last week.

Furthermore, Mr. Tharoor said he had appended a qualification to the government's assertion regarding the 'exceptional' ease of doing business in the State. "I noted that if it is true and not merely hyperbole, this represents an astonishing development," he said.

Mr. Tharoor credited former Chief Minister Oommen Chandy and former Industries Minister and Indian Union Muslim League national general secretary P.K. Kunhalikutty for placing Kerala on a steep upward growth trajectory, which he said the LDF was struggling to emulate after decades of resistance to investments. Mr. Tharoor denied he had painted Kerala as a utopian polity. He highlighted the State's high unemployment rate, burgeoning debt, and agrarian crisis.

Mr. Tharoor's attempt to put the record straight did not ward off sharp criticism from UDF convener M.M. Hassan, who said that the Congress viewed Mr. Tharoor's variance from the party line seriously. He accused Mr. Tharoor of ingesting LDF's propaganda trick hook, line, and sinker without any reality check.

Mr. Hassan and Mr. Kunhalikutty also took strong exception to Mr. Tharoor branding Prime Minister Modi's visit to the U.S. a 'success'. Both leaders said the humiliating extradition of manacled Indian emigrants to the country on U.S. warplanes starkly contrasted Mr. Tharoor's opinion. Asked if he was gravitating from Congress politics, Mr. Hassan said the former was best placed to answer the question.

LDF leaders deluged Mr. Tharoor with praise. Communist Party of India (CPI) State secretary Binoy Viswam said Mr. Tharoor had demolished Congress propaganda that Kerala's industrial growth was on an irreversible downward spiral like a 'house of cards'. CPI(M) Central Committee member A.K. Balan lauded Mr. Tharoor for being forthright about Kerala's development with the rider that the LDF did not agree with the latter's 'other views'.

Kishan Reddy dismisses Telangana MLA's 'threat' to quit BJP

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP president and Union Minister of Coal and Mines G. Kishan Reddy on Sunday dismissed the "veiled threat of resignation" issued by Goshamahal MLA T. Raja Singh, stating that "not much importance needs to be attached to it".

He made this remark at at a press conference in Nalgonda when asked about complaints from 'certain' Backward Class leaders in the party of being "discriminated against". He said some leaders were talking out of line but he was not too concerned about it.

Ahead of the MLC polls later this month, the discontent over the choice of district presidents has come out in the open.

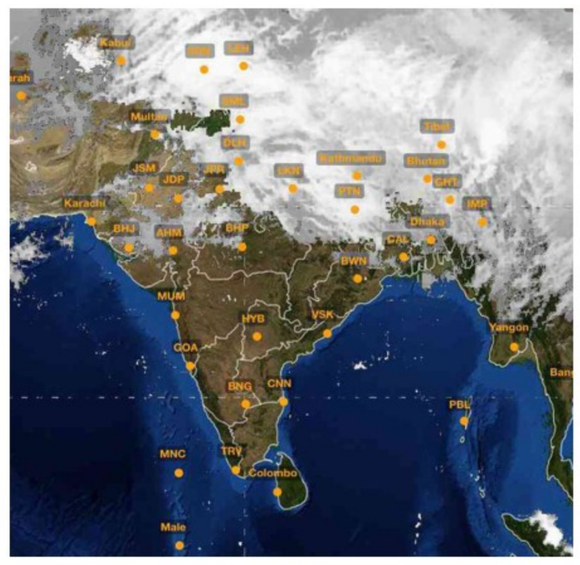
A three-time MLA, Mr. Raja Singh was particularly peeved that his choice of a candidate for the district president was not considered and his efforts to seek clarifications from the leadership were rebuffed.

In a video statement a few days ago, hesaid that his recommendation of a BC or SC leader was ignored and a "Majlis Party agent" was appointed instead. He said that he does not want to be a 'broker' and that he was facing 'harassment' within the party.

Former party president and Union Minister of State for Home Bandi Sanjay Kumar advised him not to wash dirty linen in public.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Dense fog conditions very likely in isolated pockets of Sub-Himalayan West Bengal & Sikkim

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	30.0	13.8	Kozhikode	—	35.6	25.6
Ahmedabad	—	34.0	19.2	Kurnool	—	38.2	19.9
Aizawl	—	28.6	9.8	Lucknow	—	29.5	12.1
Allahabad	—	31.8	13.4	Madurai	—	36.0	19.6
Bengaluru	—	33.0	18.2	Mangaluru	—	33.2	24.8
Bhopal	—	31.0	14.4	Mumbai	—	32.6	21.2
Bhubaneswar	—	35.4	17.4	Mysuru	—	34.0	17.0
Chandigarh	—	26.6	10.0	New Delhi	—	27.4	10.9
Chennai	—	33.5	22.1	Patna	—	28.4	14.6
Coimbatore	—	35.0	20.4	Port Blair	—	30.5	21.4
Dehradun	—	25.2	8.6	Puducherry	—	33.1	19.8
Gangtok	23.0	8.6	5.5	Pune	—	37.7	18.3
Goa	—	—	—	Raipur	—	35.0	16.6
Guwahati	—	26.0	12.0	Ranchi	—	30.0	12.8
Hubballi	—	36.0	18.0	Shillong	—	16.3	3.8
Hyderabad	—	33.4	19.0	Shimla	—	12.8	5.6
Imphal	—	23.5	12.5	Srinagar	—	18.0	0.4
Jaipur	—	28.9	16.8	Thiruvananthapuram	—	32.6	32.6
Kochi	—	31.4	25.4	Tiruchi	—	33.7	21.0
Kohima	—	21.5	9.4	Vijayawada	—	33.6	22.2
Kolkata	—	30.2	19.8	Visakhapatnam	—	31.5	24.5

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.53	..38	.17	...227	...181	
Bengaluru	.12	6	.18	62	...120	
Chennai	.14	..—	100	59	66	
Delhi	.22	..76	.41	...351	...311	
Hyderabad	...7	125	...5	...132	...140	
Kolkata	.10	..53	.26	...150	...112	
Lucknow	.10	..61	.52	...280	...221	
Mumbai	.50	..62	..—	...202	...211	
Pune	..—	120	.24	...207	...155	
Visakhapatnam	...9	..66	.22	82	...119	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Gurugram, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 304 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 20.

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Vitla cheating case: ASI from Kerala arrested

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

Dakshina Kannada police have arrested an assistant sub-inspector of police (ASI) from Thrissur district in Kerala in connection with a gang cheating a businessman of Vitla ₹30 lakh by posing as Enforcement Directorate officials on January 3, 2025.

Shaffir Babu, 48, ASI at Kodangallur police station, who has been arrested is the mastermind of the cheating, police said in a statement on Sunday.

Police said six persons posing as ED officials entered the house of M. Sulaiman, an agriculturist and a beedi entrepreneur, at Kolnad village under Vitla police station limits on the night of January 3 and made away with ₹30 lakh cash, stating that they have "seized" the money.

Police a few days ago arrested Anil Fernandes, 49, T.S. Sachin, 29 and S. Shabin, 27, all residents of Kollam in Kerala, in this connection.

Later on February 15, the police arrested Sirajuddin, 37, of Kolnadu in Bantwal taluk of Dakshina Kannada, who had reportedly passed on information to the accused about Mr. Sulaiman's house. Based on his information, the police further arrested Mohammed Iqbal, 38, of Bantwal and Mohammed Ansar, 27, of Padil in Mangaluru. As the investigation progressed the police arrested the mastermind the ASI, the statement said.

The police said Sirajuddin had some grouse against Mr. Sulaiman and he informed the ASI about Mr. Sulaiman's property.

Stalin flays Pradhan's remarks on language policy of Tamil Nadu

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

M.K. Stalin

Strongly reacting to Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan's comments on Tamil Nadu's position against the National Education Policy (NEP) and the three-language formula, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Sunday asserted that Tamils would not accept brash blackmail and that Delhi might have to see "Tamils' unique nature" if the State was denied of [Samagra Shiksha] funds.

Referring to Mr. Pradhan's observations that Tamil Nadu will have to come to terms with the Indian Constitution, Mr. Stalin asked: "Which section of the Indian Constitution is making the three-language policy mandatory? Can the [Union] Education Minister point out?"

Underlining that the Indian Union was only made of States and that 'Education' was a subject in the Concurrent List, Mr. Stalin contended: "The Union government is not its [Education's] sole custodian. The Tamils will not tolerate the brash blackmail that there would be no funds for Tamil Nadu until the three-language policy was accepted."

"We are only asking for our rights," he said. "If you speak with brashness as if we are asking for private property, Delhi might have to see Tamils' unique nature," he added in a social media post.

Politically motivated

Mr. Pradhan, during a media interaction, had said the issue with Tamil Nadu's position was not only with PM SHRI schools but also on several other issues concerning the NEP. He described them as "politically motivated" and they were "not for the welfare of Tamil Nadu."

"They are doing mischief. They have to come to terms with the Indian Constitution. How can they think that they are above the Constitution?" he said. "They have to accept the NEP in letter and spirit. When all parts of the country were accepting the NEP, Why they will not accept," he added. Pointing out that the NEP was for making the local language the primary language, Mr. Pradhan asked: "Are they opposing that? They are confused people. For their own political intent, they are creating this kind of confusion."

There were many Central schools functioning in Tamil Nadu and young students were good in three-language formula, he said, adding: "Why do they debar from three-language formula? The country is changing, the globe is changing. What is wrong in that?"

Will strongly oppose imposition of Hindi in T.N., says AIADMK

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

D. Jayakumar

AIADMK leader and former Tamil Nadu Minister D. Jayakumar on Sunday said his party will strongly oppose the imposition of Hindi in any form.

"Students of Tamil Nadu are getting affected by the political game. The AIADMK will strongly oppose the imposition of Hindi in any form, even if it comes in the form of the Central government's National Education Policy (NEP). The strongest voice against it would be that of AIADMK general secretary [Edappadi K. Palaniswami]...," Mr. Jayakumar said on social media.

"No one can shake the two-language policy in Tamil Nadu. They should realise that the students of Tamil Nadu will be affected by their political game. The funds due to our students should not get blocked for any reason..."

The AIADMK leader recalled that when the NEP had come about, Mr. Palaniswami had announced that the two-language formula would continue in Tamil Nadu. "In August 2024, too, he had issued a statement against the Centre over the funds due to Tamil Nadu for education programmes," he said, adding that it was the AIADMK that always held the two-language policy up.

MDMK general secretary Vaiko condemned Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's assertion that the Centre would not release funds till the State accepted the NEP.

'Outdated policy'

BJP State president K. Annamalai, however, said there was no point in sticking to the two-language policy. "It is 2025, and the world is developing rapidly. What is the point of imposing an outdated policy of the 1960s on the children of Tamil Nadu?" he posted on social media.

Most of the private schools run by DMK members across Tamil Nadu follow the CBSE syllabus, and three languages were being taught.

A sour note over Malayalam film music rights

S.R. Praveen
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Yet another tussle appears to be brewing within the Malayalam film industry over ownership of music rights, which has become a lucrative source of revenue in the digital era.

The Kerala Film Producers' Association (KFPA) is set to cease collaborating with music composers who seek rights to film albums.

The association is currently drafting an agreement for music directors which will include clauses to this effect.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, B. Rakesh, secretary of the association, said the move was necessitated by demands from some music directors for sole rights of the music albums.

Deal to be finalised

"We have already arrived at agreements with other technicians. The agreement with music directors will be finalised soon. The association will ask producers to stop working with composers who demand music rights. Only a handful of new music composers have started demanding rights. These music albums turn out to be hits only because we are spending crores to make films with popular stars. If they can churn out hits in their individual capacity, why not release independent albums? Henceforth, the producers will hold the full rights to the music album," Mr. Rakesh said.

Film Producers' Association is set to cease collaborating with composers who seek rights to film song albums

However, music director Deepak Dev, who is currently composing for the upcoming film *Empuraan*, begged to differ. Though he has not yet demanded music rights, choosing instead a proper remuneration, he said that new- age composers might be demanding the rights because they were not paid in proportion to the revenue that their popular songs were generating.

"If the producers are willing to provide the remuneration that the stars are demanding, why can't they provide the same to technicians? Music should also be treated as an important element in the popularity of many of these films. I haven't yet demanded rights for music because I have got the remuneration that I wished for, but that might not be the case with everyone. Music directors also may want to keep the rights if they want to release reworked versions of their tracks in other languages in the future," Mr. Dev told *The Hindu*.

In recent years, major music labels have started investing heavily in Malayalam cinema. With various music and social media platforms, including Spotify, YouTube, and Instagram reels, opening up new sources of revenue, the music from popular films also ensure considerable returns over a period of time. Producers have now realised the revenue-making possibilities of having the ownership of the music in the short as well as longer term and are keen to ensure that composers demanding rights does not become an industry practice.

Many of the legendary music composers of Malayalam, from Baburaj to Raveendran, have struggled financially in their later years, a situation which might not have had happened had they owned the rights to their songs.

Cartoon on Modi: Vikatan website turns inaccessible

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The news website www.vikatan.com, belonging to leading Tamil magazine group Vikatan had become inaccessible for many users late Saturday evening to Sunday afternoon. The magazine sought to link this development to the publication of a cartoon depicting Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his hands and legs chained seated besides US President Donald Trump in its digital magazine Vikatan Plus on February 10.

This had prompted Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and several other political party leaders to condemn the Centre for what they said was "blocking" of the Vikatan website.

On X on Saturday, Vikatan said, "There have been numerous reports that the Vikatan website has been blocked by the Centre. Many users from different locations have reported that they are unable to access the site. However, as of now, there has been no official announcement from the Centre regarding the blocking of the website."

It said the cartoon highlighted "the issue of Indians being handcuffed and deported from the U.S., while the PM remained silent on the matter". This cartoon, it added, was criticised by BJP supporters.

Transactional turn

India must push back against the U.S. and safeguard its interests

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington last week was brief but packed with headline-generating developments. The visit came less than a month after U.S. President Donald Trump was sworn in, making Mr. Modi the fourth world leader to hold bilateral meetings with him, following the leaders of Israel, Japan, and Jordan, all close U.S. allies. The joint statement issued afterwards outlined a range of substantive discussions. While many announcements focused on India's purchases of American goods and investments in the U.S., they managed to avoid some of the tough measures many had anticipated. Both sides launched 'Mission 500' ($500 billion in bilateral trade by 2030) and initiated discussions on a free trade agreement, with phase one of the draft expected this year. Mr. Trump announced an increase in Indian purchases of U.S. energy, oil, and defence equipment, moves expected to help balance the $45.7 billion U.S. trade deficit within the total $130 billion goods trade. Additionally, there was agreement on a new umbrella framework, COMPACT, or Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology for the 21st Century, to streamline cooperation across key sectors. They also rebranded the Biden-era Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) as Transforming the Relationship Utilising Strategic Technology (TRUST), focusing on semiconductors, quantum computing, and AI, with a commitment to developing an AI infrastructure road map this year. A significant moment came when Mr. Trump announced his approval of the extradition of Tahawwur Rana, involved in 26/11 attacks, to India for trial.

Once the dust settles on Mr. Trump's unconventional remarks and Mr. Modi's rare engagement with the media in this format, India must assess the broader takeaways from this visit. The positive optics and their camaraderie signal a strong foundation for India-U.S. relations over the next four years. There is also clear continuity in key areas of strategic partnership, including Indo-Pacific engagement and the Quad, with Mr. Trump's planned visit to Delhi for the Quad Summit later this year expected to reinforce these commitments. However, economic discussions, trade, energy, nuclear cooperation and defence are likely to dominate the India-U.S. agenda, giving the relationship a transactional turn reminiscent of Mr. Trump's first tenure. There is not much evidence that Mr. Modi's visit significantly softened Mr. Trump's stance on imposing counter-tariffs and reciprocal taxes or influenced a more humane approach to the deportation of undocumented immigrants aboard military flights. These could present challenges for the Indian government going forward. As India engages with the new U.S. administration, it must carefully assess its own interests, assert its position where necessary, and push back when required to safeguard its strategic and economic priorities.

Sex and violence

Marriage should not provide immunity for sexual violence

A recent ruling by the Chhattisgarh High Court, which held that "unnatural sex" by a husband in marriage is not an offence, heavily relies on the presumption of consent within a marital relationship. The case involved a 40-year-old man from Bastar district who had been convicted by a sessions court in connection with the death of his wife in 2017. The sessions court found that the wife, in her 30s, fell ill and subsequently died following a forced physical relationship. However, on appeal, the High Court acquitted the husband. At the core of any discussion on marriage, or any relationship, must be the principle of consent. When physical harm occurs, especially leading to a tragic death, it cannot be excused under the presumption of marital consent. The issue at hand is not about the nature of the sexual act but the absence of consent and the use of force. The High Court relied on Exception II of Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code, which does not recognise marital rape as an offence unless the wife is under 15 years old – the Supreme Court of India raised this age to 18 in the Independent Thought vs Union of India & Anr. case (2017) – to justify acquitting the husband. This overturned the sessions court's verdict, which had sentenced him to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment.

The ruling once again brings attention to the ambiguous legal terrain surrounding sexual violence in marriage. In October 2024, the Supreme Court deferred hearings on pleas to criminalise marital rape. In previous judgments, it had indicated that the responsibility lies with the legislature to introduce laws on this issue. The Union government has also stated that criminalising marital rape could "undermine the institution of marriage". India remains one of the few countries where marital rape is not a criminal offence. Yet, data from the National Family Health Survey 5 (2019-2021) reveal that 32% of ever-married women aged 18 to 49 years in India have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional spousal violence, with only a small percentage seeking help. This stark reality should serve as a wake-up call for lawmakers, law enforcement, and society at large to take urgent action in ensuring women can live free from violence and fear. While constitutional safeguards on life, liberty, equality, and dignity exist, and laws are in place to protect women, true change requires a shift in societal attitudes and mindsets. No relationship, marriage included, should provide immunity for violence.

The panchayati raj movement is in distress

The special discussion in Parliament on the 75th anniversary of the Indian Constitution has long passed. While several salient aspects of the Constitution and policy directions adopted by previous governments were highlighted, one heard very little on a vital aspect of governance in India.

The 73rd amendment to the Constitution, passed in 1992, is one of the landmarks of India's journey as a constitutional republic, establishing the panchayati raj system. However, the momentum towards deepening local governance in India has stalled. Big shifts in both technology and society are threatening to make panchayats irrelevant, unless we are prepared to rethink their role. The 73rd amendment initiated the process of institutionalising decentralisation in rural India. The three-tier system, at the village, block, and district levels, with a regular cycle of local elections and 50% reservation for women, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes, kicked off a movement that took democracy to the grassroots, thus emphasising the importance of local representation and inclusion in political leadership.

Suvojit Chattopadhyay

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There is one bright spot

Panchayati raj elections are now keenly contested in many parts of the country. There have been many success stories – possibly the most notable of them being the scale of women's participation in leadership (nearly 14 lakh elected women representatives). The Constitution also mandated State Finance Commissions to recommend the quantum of funds that should flow to local governments as well as the administrative mechanisms by which it should take place. Various social sector programmes are now implemented through local governments, particularly gram panchayats (village-level local government).

Why then is the panchayati raj movement in distress? There are several reasons such as a decline in public participation, overdependence on centrally sponsored schemes, and politicisation through the engagement of political parties, which are equally important factors behind the steady decline of panchayats even in pioneer States such as Kerala.

But one must look at the longer-term systemic factors that have affected the evolution of the panchayati raj movement in India. Panchayats now operate in a very different development paradigm from when they were originally introduced, and there is now a real risk that the spirit of the panchayati raj movement will die.

Panchayats now operate in a very different development paradigm

A decline, the big shifts

Let us look at four such big shifts.

First, administrative decentralisation has plateaued. In order to function effectively, State governments need to devolve staff to local governments and cede administrative control. Similarly, the flow of untied grants that flow to local governments needs to increase to enhance autonomy in local decision-making. Having made an initial set of reforms, the sense one gets is that there is no momentum. A report in 2022 by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj showed that less than 20% of States have devolved all 29 subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution.

Second, in practical terms, panchayats have been forced to cede fiscal autonomy over recent years. Direct transfers to panchayats increased from ₹1.45 lakh crore under the Thirteenth Finance Commission (2010-15) to ₹2.36 lakh crore under the Fifteenth Finance Commission (2021-26). At the same time, there has been a significant reduction in untied grants, from 85% in the Thirteenth Finance Commission to 60% in the Fifteenth Finance Commission. Further, these direct transfers are being used by the central government to marginalise State governments in the name of efficiency, while the tied grants give them more control through central government functionaries and central scheme guidelines.

Third, the larger reason is a reimagination of the welfare state in India that has taken root over the last few years, an overt reliance by political parties on cash transfers of various hues to woo the electorate. And since these were delivered primarily using the Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) platform, the role of gram panchayats as intermediaries for beneficiary selection or grievance redress has reduced significantly. For example, the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, which disburses ₹6,000 annually to farmers, operates through direct transfers without the active involvement of panchayati raj institutions. While efficient, this model reduces the local accountability that panchayats traditionally provided.

Fourth, is the rapid urbanisation that India has seen in recent decades. In 1990, nearly three-quarters of India lived in rural areas. This has now decreased to around 60%, and is going down steadily. The consistent trend of urbanisation has meant that the policy focus of development has shifted to India's cities and towns. Municipal reforms, both of governance and financing, is the main priority of today.

Ways to revive the system

As highlighted, it is evident that over the last decade, the view from the top is increasingly one that treats panchayats merely as last-mile delivery instruments for social sector schemes in rural India. This view of local governance is not conducive to a revival of panchayats in the country.

Of course, electoral politics at the panchayat level and the representation and the power that comes from winning will not allow panchayats to wither away very soon. But local governance in rural India needs to be revived in substantive terms as 94 crore Indians still live in villages. Over 45% of the population is still engaged in agriculture. Rural India – call it Bharat if you will – cannot be overlooked.

With advancements in technology, citizen engagement in local planning, decision-making and accountability processes will deepen. A networked panchayati raj system could play a vital role in bridging the rural-urban divide, for instance, by supporting safe and dignified internal migration, and also supporting both migrants and their families that stay behind.

Another area towards which the role of panchayats could be focused is to play a role in enabling water conservation and renewable energy generation at scale. Panchayats can reclaim their role in the management of common property resources, bringing to bear a mix of scientific practices, traditional knowledge and public finances. Panchayats can also play a key role in implementing community-based disaster risk management programmes, integrating early warning systems, disaster-resilient infrastructure, and capacity-building for residents.

We need to look further out and talk more to people. In order to reestablish the momentum behind local governance reforms and to support what is still a significant proportion of India's population that lives in its villages, we need to adopt a new vision for panchayati raj in India.

Interpreting the recent Bangladesh-Pakistan thaw

The bitter legacy of the 1971 liberation war, where Bangladesh split from Pakistan, has long steered the nature of ties between Dhaka and Islamabad. However, recent bilateral engagement between the two sides demonstrates Dhaka's intent to diversify its foreign policy trajectory in the subcontinent. Since August 2024, after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government following a student-led revolt, there have been several meetings between Muhammad Yunus, the Chief Adviser to the interim Bangladesh government, and Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. In contrast, the absence of any engagement between Mr. Yunus and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi sheds light on this shifting equation.

The ousting of Ms. Hasina set the stage for a potential recalibration in the region – one that is likely to unsettle New Delhi. During Ms. Hasina's 15-year tenure, bilateral relations remained strained, partly due to her family's historic grievances against Pakistan's ruling class. Her close alliance with India likely emerged as a key factor for the continued frosty ties with Islamabad in the following years. Tensions between Bangladesh and Pakistan peaked in 2016, with both countries expelling diplomats.

Aishwaria Sonavane

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Recent developments

However, under the leadership of Mr. Yunus, there has been a strengthening of ties. Some key and recent developments underscore this. For instance, Bangladesh hosted a high-level Pakistani military delegation in Rangpur, located close to the strategically crucial Siliguri Corridor. This was followed by a rare visit by Lieutenant-general S.M. Kamr-ul-Hassan, the Bangladesh Army's second-in-command, to Rawalpindi to meet with Pakistan's Army, Navy, and Air Force chiefs. Dhaka has also announced the resumption of direct flights to Islamabad and also participated in Pakistan's Aman 2025 naval exercises in the Arabian Sea (February 7-11), which included the deployment of a major Bangladeshi warship to Pakistan for the first time in over a decade.

With the count of hostile neighbours growing, India needs to be both vigilant and constructive in its ties with Bangladesh

Despite the apparent warming of relations, can these interactions translate into meaningful outcomes? Or will they remain symbolic with little tangible impact?

The ground realities

While Mr. Yunus has watered down Dhaka's demand that Pakistan to apologise for the "1971 genocide" to one merely seeking a "resolution of the issues", Dhaka will face challenges in managing public opinion. A significant number of Bangladeshis still view the separation from Pakistan as a bedrock of their national identity. Without addressing this deeply ingrained historic grievance in the psyche of Bangladeshi society, substantial diplomatic progress appears unlikely in the long term. This remains especially true should Islamabad continue to frame the 1971 war as an Indian conspiracy rather than acknowledging it as a separatist movement that was a product of an expression of Bengali identity and in response to the excesses of the government in West Pakistan. In addition, from a strategic and economic perspective, a partnership with Islamabad will offer limited gains for Dhaka, particularly given the misalignment between the economic realities of both countries. The geographical separation of Bangladesh and Pakistan by Indian territory is further likely to create connectivity and political hurdles for smooth trade.

As India closely monitors the situation, the diplomatic manoeuvres will be perceived as Pakistan's efforts to counter New Delhi's faltering influence in Dhaka after Ms. Hasina's ouster. Interestingly, these dynamics also coincide with India's unprecedented pivot of warming relations with the ruling Taliban in Afghanistan, a traditional ally of Pakistan. Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri met Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, the acting foreign minister of the Taliban government, in Dubai, in January, which is the highest level of interaction between both sides ever since the group took control of Afghanistan in 2021.

The outline of New Delhi's approach

With the count of hostile neighbours now growing, which includes the Maldives and Nepal's increasing alignment with China, does New Delhi have a new cause for concern?

India's approach to Bangladesh should be grounded in an understanding of the economic and geographical realities. Despite the evolving nature of Dhaka-Islamabad ties, Bangladesh will find it challenging to adopt an overtly anti-India stance, given its geographic proximity and economic dependence on India. India remains Bangladesh's leading trading partner in the region. In 2023, Indian exports to Bangladesh were $11.25 billion, while Bangladesh's exports to India stood at approximately $2 billion in 2023. Many of these imports, particularly raw materials, are crucial for Bangladesh's industries.

That said, India must remain vigilant: first, there is scope for an axis involving Bangladesh, China, and Pakistan, and second, on the issue of security in its northeast States. India must clarify its red lines with Bangladesh in critical areas such as terrorism, weapons trade, joint military drills, and maritime security. While remaining firm on these issues, New Delhi should also constructively engage with Bangladesh, laying an emphasis on people-to-people contacts, cultural exchanges, and developmental projects. Both countries must also continue their cooperation on the critical issues of border trade and smuggling, water sharing and refugee concerns. Maintaining this momentum will require New Delhi to proactively address prevailing anti-India and anti-Hindu sentiments in Bangladesh as well as capitalise on its economic engagement to reinforce its ties with Dhaka. Maintaining a constituency that is favourable to India within Bangladesh remains crucial for long-term strategic stability.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Stampede at Delhi station

Sadly, most railway stations in the country do not have enough entry and exit points. The priority should be the safety of human lives. With the heavy rush at railway stations, the Indian Railways cannot absolve itself of its responsibility to ensure safety. Are not the authorities aware of the huge rush due to the Kumbh? It is in times such as these that safety measures need to be the best ("Amid Kumbh rush, 15 feared dead in stampede at New Delhi railway station", February 16).

Balasubramaniam Pavani,
Secunderabad

Even with men and machinery such as police and announcements, it is unfortunate to have a tragedy. It shows the utter failure of crowd management.

Dr. D.V.G. Sankara Rao,
Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh

It is inconceivable that the railway administration was unaware of the mammoth crowds. With crowds expected to grow in the days ahead, the government must ensure that there is foolproof safety and security as people head to the Kumbh.

V. Johan Dhanakumar,
Chennai

People do not enter any platform without tickets (unless the railway officials have begun issuing tickets on trains). Did not the officials know how many tickets were issued, since it is all computerised with no manual writing and issuing, and realise that the special train could not accommodate all the passengers on their way to Prayagraj?

This sort of overcrowding happens regularly, more so when youngsters travel by train for examinations and recruitment drives, or when people go home for religious festivals. An audit of the number of passengers and the number of tickets issued for a specific destination should be done to verify the extent of the callous attitude of the Indian Railways.

Hemachandra Basappa,
Bengaluru

As always, committees and commissions will emerge and are likely to pin the blame on low-ranking officials. This cycle of scapegoating must end.

V. Nagarajan,
Chennai

The ceasefire

The ceasefire between Hamas and Israel brings only temporary relief. Until the deeper Palestinian issue is addressed and meaningful steps are taken toward a sustainable two-state solution, future hostilities remain a looming threat. Tranquillity in the region is not just a regional necessity but also a global imperative.

Rayapur Pradham,
Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh

Sent back from America

The chain of deportations from the United States highlights the ongoing immigration crisis. While the U.S. has the right to deport illegal migrants, the Indian government must take responsibility in addressing the root causes ('Ground Zero' page, February 15 and "U.S. flight brings second batch of 116 deportees", February 16). Stronger policies and awareness campaigns are essential to discourage unlawful migration and to promote safer, legal pathways for job seekers abroad. This issue transcends legal and political boundaries, emphasising the need to safeguard human lives and ensure ethical migration practices.

Gaurav Badhwar,
Haryana, Rohtak

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

The silent crisis of rat-hole mining

On January 29, the Gauhati High Court took suo motu cognisance of the mining tragedy in Umrangso, Assam. The January 6 mine flooding in Umrangso, which trapped nine labourers and killed at least four, was yet another preventable tragedy in a series of accidents in the north-east. For instance, in Meghalaya, at least 30 miners have lost their lives in the past five years due to similar accidents. Weak enforcement has allowed these disasters to persist, with influential individuals operating illegal mines unchecked. Rather than taking preventive action, authorities respond only after lives are lost.

Utkarsh Yadav

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Why illegal mining persists

Coal mining in Meghalaya and Assam, once a small-scale practice, expanded dangerously in the 1980s due to industrial demand from West Bengal and Bangladesh. The region's terrain made mechanised extraction difficult, leading to a proliferation of rat-hole mines. This hazardous method involves digging narrow tunnels that are barely large enough for a person to crawl through, posing significant risks to miners. Rat-hole mining occurs in two forms: side-cutting, which follows coal seams along hill slopes, and box-cutting, where miners dig pits up to 400 feet deep and extract coal horizontally, forming a tunnel network. This technique, prevalent in the north-east, particularly Meghalaya and the borders of Assam, poses significant safety and environmental hazards. The mining period stretches between November and March. Migrant labourers, often trapped in cycles of debt, are lured by 'Sardars' (labour agents) under exploitative conditions that amount to bonded labour. Reports highlight that children are trafficked into these mines due to their ability to navigate the narrow tunnels, making them easy targets for abuse. There are approximately 26,000 unclosed mine openings, each employing up to 200 workers in shifts, putting thousands of labourers at daily risk in hazardous conditions.

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) banned rat-hole mining on April 17, 2014, due to environmental degradation and unsafe working conditions. This decision was later upheld by the Supreme Court in *State of Meghalaya v. All Dimasa Students Union* (2019). However, enforcement remains weak, as many illegal mines operate under the influence of powerful bureaucrats and coal mafias. Whistle blowers, including local officials and activists, face threats while authorities fail to hold perpetrators accountable.

Several States indirectly enable rat-hole mining by exploiting regulatory loopholes. They are often under pressure from coal mafias and local politicians who profit from these illegal operations. For instance, the Meghalaya government has attempted to secure an exemption under Schedule 6, Paragraph 12A(b) of the Constitution to regulate coal mining on its own terms, bypassing national laws such as the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act). The State Assembly even passed a resolution seeking this exemption, but the resolution remains unapproved. Economic and political interests drive this effort – coal mining generates revenue and employment – while powerful individuals with stakes in the industry resist enforcement of the ban. However, under Section 23C of the MMDR Act, Meghalaya is obligated to prevent illegal mining. Yet, it has failed to create State-level laws to enforce the 2014 NGT ban. As a result, illegal mining continues.

Assam too has failed to prevent illegal rat-hole mining, leading to recurring tragedies. Despite the NGT ban and Supreme Court directives, the lack of stringent State regulations allows such operations to persist. If the State government is unable or unwilling to act, the Union government must step in, as it did in Karnataka's Bellary region in 2011, when large-scale illegal mining forced the Supreme Court and the Centre to impose a ban, with the latter using its powers under Section 30 of the MMDR Act.

Stronger State laws, technological surveillance, and alternative livelihoods must replace reactionary governance

A multi-faceted approach

Now, with the Gauhati High Court taking suo motu cognisance of the Assam tragedy, there is renewed hope for accountability and action. However, unless governments take proactive measures rather than simply reacting after lives are lost, judicial directives will remain ineffective. The failure of Assam and Meghalaya to enforce the law is not just administrative negligence but a violation of Article 21 of the Constitution (right to life).

To tackle the menace of rat-hole mining, a multi-faceted approach is essential. First, policy reforms must criminalise rat-hole mining under the MMDR Act, with stricter penalties under Section 21 and enhanced monitoring mechanisms. Ensuring compliance requires incorporating the ban into State-specific regulations under Section 23C of the Act. This would allow States to craft localised frameworks tailored to their unique challenges, establish accountability measures, and close enforcement gaps. Second, alternative livelihoods for mining-dependent communities, such as eco-tourism, must be prioritised to reduce reliance on illegal activities. Third, technology can play a transformative role. Satellite-based monitoring can track mining operations, improve transparency, and curb illegal practices. The Ministry of Mines' Mining Surveillance System could enhance enforcement, as it did in Karnataka. Empowering local communities through stronger enforcement of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, and requiring their consent for mining can promote inclusivity.

A studied silence over vandalism

Ambedkar statues have been vandalised in U.P., but Mayawati remains mum

STATE OF PLAY

Mayank Kumar
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On Republic Day, a man attempted to vandalise a life-sized statue of B.R. Ambedkar, adjacent to the Golden Temple, in Amritsar, Punjab. When images were circulated showing him climbing atop the statue with a hammer, there was widespread condemnation. The Punjab police invoked sedition charges against the accused under Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

Meanwhile, in Uttar Pradesh, where roughly 21% of the population is Dalit, at least 13 Ambedkar statues have been vandalised in the last four and a half months. These incidents have not drawn any public attention.

The first case was reported on October 3, 2024, in Sultanpur district's Belsada village under the Kotwali Dehat police station. Locals, mostly Dalits, organised a protest demanding action against the culprits. The administration repaired the statue and the police launched a probe to identify the miscreants. However, a second incident occurred just the next day in Ballia district under the Phephana police station limits, and the third took place on October 5 in Lucknow, under the Kakori police station limits. More than a month later, on November 16, the fourth reported incident took place in Gonda district's Samarupur village. A few days later, on November 22, there was another reported case of vandalism in Jasapur village, under the Rasulabad police station limits in Kanpur. Instances where also reported in November and December

from Ballia, an upper caste-dominated district. The next few incidents took place in January and February this year in the Varanasi, Mirzapur, Aligarh, Barabanki, and Baghpat districts. In the latest case dated February 15 in Baghpat, when responding to protests, the administration promised to reinstall the statue.

All these incidents came to light in the morning, which means they took place during the night. The police have registered complaints under sections of the law dealing with damage to public property against unknown persons, who remain at large. In some cases, the damaged statues have been repaired by the public, who raised funds. To pacify the complainants, the administration has also promised to install cameras in parks and other public spaces to deter vandalism.

While these episodes point to the failure of law-enforcement agencies in preventing the vandalism of a statue of a Dalit icon, they equally point to a weakness in the political and social mobilisation of Dalits. This was not the case in U.P. during the 1990s and 2000s when the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was a prominent player in the State's electoral landscape. The BSP would raise Dalit issues, create awareness about their rights, and organise demonstrations over the community's concerns. The party installed hundreds of Ambedkar statues in public spaces as a marker of the community's identity. The Bahujan movement flourished, with the BSP forming the government four times in U.P. However, in the 2024 Lok Sabha election, the BSP secured only 9.39% of the vote share – its lowest in almost three decades. Its electoral fortunes have changed for the worse over the last 10 years. The party lacks both ambition and organisational heft to make a difference.

Dalit activists have blamed feudal elements for the vandalism. They believe that "anti-social elements" are trying to demoralise the community by attacking their most important icon. Even as Dalit social mobilisation on the ground remains weak, there have been voices on social media condemning these incidents. Many people have pointed out that Ambedkar is not just a Dalit icon, but also the architect of India's Constitution and so an attack against him is an attack against the Constitution and the values it upholds.

Following the incident in Amritsar, Ms. Mayawati called the incident "shameful" and demanded immediate and stringent legal action against such "anti-social elements". She also accused the State's Aam Aadmi Party government of negligence. However, in U.P., where there have been at least 13 similar incidents, the BSP chief has not said a word.

When asked about the vandalism, the Opposition parties, particularly the Congress, claimed that these acts were a fallout of the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) "politics of hate", which has emboldened feudal elements. But why U.P.'s most vocal Dalit voice for decades chooses to maintain a studied silence over these acts is both disappointing and curious.

The perception shift against the AAP in the Delhi election

After enjoying 58.1% support in early January, the Aam Aadmi Party experienced a drastic fall

DATA POINT

Subhash Tanan

The 2025 Delhi Assembly election was nothing short of a political turning point, reshaping the electoral landscape of India's capital in ways few had anticipated. Data from Codemo and PeoplesPulse's survey reveal major shifts in voter behaviour, gender-based voting patterns, and the underlying factors that influenced the outcome at the polls.

The survey was conducted over more than two months with a sample size of 30,000. Samples were collected from a telephone survey. Post-stratification, a statistical modelling technique was employed where a large poll sample was combined with Census data and analysed using multi-level regression to estimate voter preferences.

Peaks and troughs

In the early days of campaigning, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) remained ahead of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in perception vote share (voters' perception of which party would win), indicating that a larger section of voters believed it could return to power.

The AAP's perception vote share surged in the initial days following the announcement of schemes such as the Mahila Samman Yojana and Sanjeevani Yojana, rising to 58.1% till January 1 **(Chart 1).** However, its fortunes started declining after the BJP's campaign machinery was set in motion ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first rally on January 5. From January 1, AAP's perception vote share margin over the BJP dropped from +19.8% points to -11.8% points.

The AAP's vote share peaked at 49.2% on January 1 and steadily declined thereafter, dropping to 40.5% by February 4. Meanwhile, the BJP and Congress improved their vote share by 4.7% points and 2.3% points respectively to reach 48.5% and 7% over the same period **(Chart 2)**.

The AAP had huge electoral success in 2015 and 2020 banking on its promise of providing corruption-free governance and populist schemes. In 2025, the BJP and Congress capitalised on the alleged corruption in the Delhi excise policy, significantly damaging the AAP's corruption-free party image. Additionally, the BJP was successful in convincing voters that it wouldn't stop the welfare schemes and financial incentives provided by the AAP government if voted to power.

Female and male voters

The AAP announced the Mahila Samman Yojana scheme and opened registrations for it, which provided the party with an initial boost with female voters. Till January 10, the party received more than 67% of the female vote share, whereas the BJP managed 28%.

However, all the gains were undone in the final phase, with the AAP's vote share among women dropping to 50.2%, while the BJP and Congress gained at its expense, rising to 41.8% and 6.1%, respectively. This decline could be attributed to the lack of financial assistance for female voters before the election, unlike in the Maharashtra and Jharkhand elections. Additionally, the BJP and Congress countered the AAP by promising similar schemes and financial incentives. In the survey, the AAP's vote share among female voters was 50.2% in 2025 compared to 62.4% in the 2020 Delhi election.

The BJP had an edge among male voters from the beginning and increased its margin over the AAP with time. In the survey, the BJP increased its vote share margin over the AAP from +4.3% points on January 1 to +17.5% points on February 4. The AAP had a 59% vote share among male voters in the 2020 election, which declined to 35.5% in 2025.

The AAP managed to secure more than 55% of the general category vote share in the 2020 Delhi election. However, in 2025, the BJP got 57.3% of the general category vote share and the AAP's vote share dwindled to 31.9%.

Other Backward Classes (OBC) votes were traditionally split between different parties. However, during this election, the BJP gained ground among OBCs with a vote share of 48.6%, while the AAP got 41.1%. The AAP had an initial lead of +5.4% points over the BJP on January 1, but its margin with the BJP reduced significantly to -7.5% points by February 4.

In the final phase of the election, AAP witnessed a significant decline in the Scheduled Caste (SC) vote share while the BJP and Congress made gains, largely due to a targeted outreach towards SC voters. On February 4, the AAP's lead over the BJP narrowed to +8.5% points, a sharp drop from its margin of +25.9% points on January 1.

Voters with origins in Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh, also known as Purvanchali voters, were a decisive factor in many constituencies. The AAP had a lead of +3.5% points over the BJP a month before the election. A month later, the AAP capitulated to Purvanchali voters as its margin with the BJP reduced to -16.7% points **(Chart 3).**

Impact of Congress

While the Congress was not seen as a major player in this election, its impact was felt in key constituencies where it managed to cut into the AAP's voter base. Among SC voters, its vote share was 7.8%, an improvement from 6.1% in the 2020 Delhi election survey.

Among Muslim voters, the Congress' vote share was 19%, a significant improvement from 12% in the 2020 Delhi election survey. Though the AAP managed to win six out of the seven Muslim-dominated seats, its win margin dropped significantly.

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Winds of change

The charts are sourced from a survey conducted by Codemo and PeoplesPulse

Chart 1: Party perception vote share trend (in %)

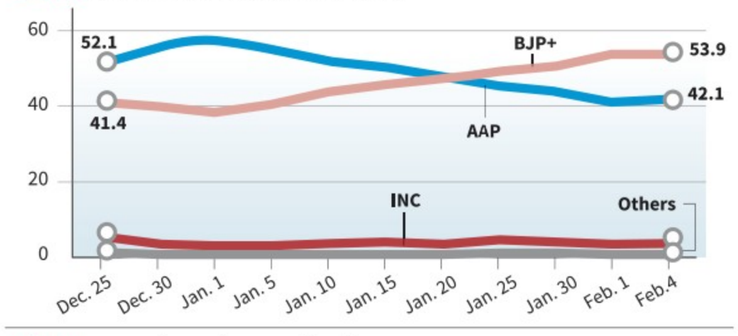


Chart 2: Party real vote share trend (in %)

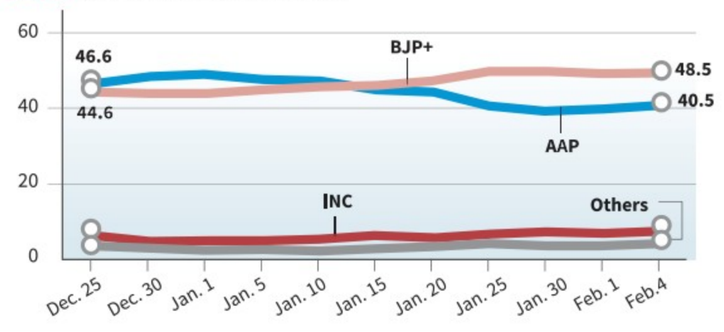
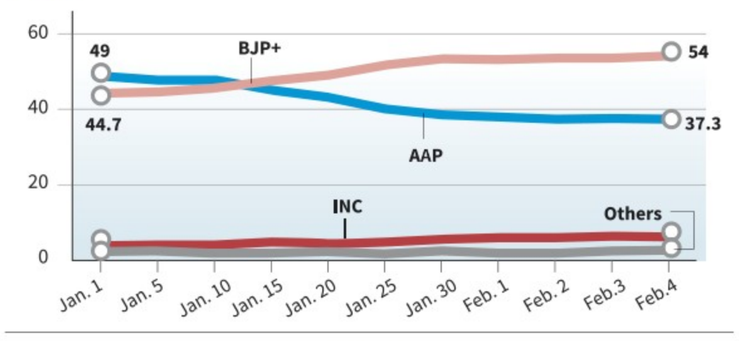


Chart 3: Party vote share | Purvanchali voters (in %)



FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 17, 1975

PLO must accept Israel: Kissinger

Bonn, Feb. 16: The U.S. Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, and the West German Foreign Minister, Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher, stressed their identity of views on the situation in the Mediterranean, Cyprus, Israel and the conference on security and co-operation in Europe following their meeting to-day at Gymnich Castle near Bonn.

Dr. Kissinger, who spoke to journalists briefly after the 90-minute meeting with Mr. Genscher, said there was no question of engaging in a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as long as it did not recognise Israel's right to existence.

Mr. Genscher said that Bonn's point of view was identical.

Dr. Kissinger said last night that Saudi Arabia had assured him that it supported his approach towards peace in West Asia.

He told reporters when he arrived here after his West Asia tour that he had been given the assurance by the Saudi Oil Minister, Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, before he left Riyadh yesterday.

Dr. Kissinger also took up with King Faisal of Saudi Arabia yesterday an American plan for long-term oil deals between producers and consumers before flying in here to discuss energy problems with West German leaders.

U.S. officials were guarded in describing King Faisal's reaction to Dr. Kissinger's "floor price" proposal during their 90-minute meeting.

However, newsmen were told that the King did not register any complaints about it. Saudi Arabia is the world's largest oil exporter and produces almost nine million barrels a day.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 17, 1925

New sailing club for the city

Madras, Feb. 17: The New Sailing Club, which has been shifted from the Boat Basin to the South Quay of the Madras Harbour, was opened by his Excellency Viscount Goschen yesterday evening. After cruising in the harbour from the anchor steps for a little while, His Excellency opened the Sailing Club. There was a large and distinguished gathering present on the occasion including the Vicountess Goschen, His Excellency the Rear Admiral Richmond, Naval Commander-in-Chief, Mr. Anderson Stuart of R.M.S. "Southampton" Col. Balfour and a number of members of the Sailing Club.

From Page One

‘Confusion over trains caused stampede’

The press was most intense at the steps leading to the foot overbridge between platforms, with passengers toppling over each other and being crushed to death, Railways sources said.

The Delhi Police have also conducted an initial inquiry, with officials saying they will look into the loopholes of the train announcement system.

For several hours after the incident, the Railways did not confirm that people had died in the stampede, and issued a comprehensive statement with the death toll only 20 hours after the tragic incident took place.

The Railways have announced that from now on, all special trains from New Delhi to Prayagraj will depart from Platform 16 only, to prevent confusion.

Four children ranging in age from seven to 15, 11 women including a septuagenarian, and three men are among the 18 dead. Of the 15 injured, three suffered serious injuries, the Railways said in a statement on Sunday evening.

Compensation paid

By Sunday evening, the Railways had paid ₹10 lakh as compensation to the kin of each of those who died, ₹2.5 lakh to the grievously injured, and ₹1 lakh to those with simple injuries, most of whom were discharged from hospital.

“This time, an unprecedented number of devotees arrived for the Maha Kumbh, and we are operating an unprecedented and record number of special trains for the ease of passengers,” said Himanshu Shekhar Upadhyay, Chief Public Relations Officer for Northern Railways.

Narsingh Deo, a member of the Railways probe committee, visited the spot at the station on Sunday afternoon.

“We have initiated the investigation and are trying to understand all the evidence we have gathered so far,” he said. “We are also checking the CCTV footage, and taking statements from eyewitnesses. Only after examining the different kinds of evidence will we work on an investigation report that will be submitted to the administration,” he added.

Delhi Police Commissioner Sanjay Arora headed a meeting of officials looking into the initial inquiry report by the police. Officials said they would look into loopholes in the announcement system, sources said.

K.P.S. Malhotra, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Railways, said both trains had been delayed and extra tickets had been purchased for Prayagraj, leading to overcrowding on the platforms. “We were aware the crowd would swell up, but everything happened in a matter of 10 to 15 minutes around 9 p.m. The crowd began gathering... Due to extra footfall of passengers, the incident occurred as a special train was announced, and people tried to catch that train...” the DCP added.

“Keeping in mind the current scenario, if there is high footfall, and extra trains need to be operated to cater to the increased footfall, we have increased the arrangements,” he said. “If people don’t rush unnecessarily, there won’t be a catastrophic effect where everyone rushes. If disciplined behaviour is followed, there is a great chance for such incidents to be averted. Our main focus is current management and future prevention,” he added, saying that there is sufficient deployment of the Railway Protection Force and the Delhi police, who have made joint arrangements at both exit points and the foot overbridge.

Third U.S. aircraft lands with over 100 deportees

Mr. Daljit Singh told presspersons in Hoshiarpur that he was duped by a travel agent who, instead of directly taking him to the U.S., resorted to the *dunki* (donkey) route to illegally enter the country.

Sharing his ordeal, Sourav, 27, from Chandiwala village in Ferozepur district of Punjab, who left for the U.S. in December 2024, said the travel agent had assured him legal entry to the U.S., but instead, he had been taken to the U.S. border through Mexico, and while crossing the border, the American authorities caught him on January 27.

“They kept me along with others in a camp for several days. Two days ago, we were told that we were being sent to India on a plane,” he said.

On February 15, ahead of the second flight from the U.S., senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha member P. Chidambaram took to social media platform X to target the Union government.

“All eyes will be on the U.S. aircraft which will land today [Saturday] in Amritsar bringing back illegal immigrants. Will the deportees be handcuffed and their legs tied with ropes? It is a test for Indian diplomacy,” Mr. Chidambaram said in his post.

A large number of people, especially youth from Punjab, travel abroad in the hope of a better life, including a rising trend of considerable magnitude in illegal migration. However, there is a paucity of authentic data on illegal migration in the public domain.

The Punjab Police set up a Special Investigation Team to probe illegal human trafficking and migration after the first batch landed. So far, 10 first information reports have been registered against travel agents based on the statements of deportees.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann urged the youth of Punjab to learn lessons from the deportation of illegal migrants, appealing to them to shun the idea of going abroad by wrong means.

Gogoi being targeted by BJP, Assam CM: Congress

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday accused the BJP and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma of indulging in an “atrocious smear campaign” and “character assassination” against Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi, adding that legal action is being initiated in the matter.

“This is character assassination of the worst type. Legal action is being initiated right away,” Mr. Ramesh said in a post on X.

“The smear campaign is because Gaurav Gogoi won the Jorhat Lok Sabha seat in June 2024 in spite of the Assam CM and other ministers camping in Jorhat and campaigning against him. It is also because the Jorhat MP has been in the forefront, revealing the blatant corruption and blackdeeds of the Assam CM,” he said.

Mr. Sarma on Saturday said a police case is likely to be registered and a special investigation team be constituted to probe into allegations of Pakistan links of the Opposition leader’s British wife Elizabeth Colburn.

Mr. Gogoi said the BJP was adopting extreme measures to defame him and his family, asserting that he would take appropriate legal action in the matter, while penning a letter in Assamese addressed to his wife and sharing it on Facebook.

Court sends ex-GM to 5-day police custody in Mumbai bank scam

Mehta is accused of siphoning off ₹122 crore from New India Cooperative Bank; more investigation necessary to find out his accomplices, say police

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Chief Judicial Magistrate court in Mumbai sent the former General Manager of New India Cooperative Bank to five days’ police custody during holiday court proceedings on Sunday for allegedly siphoning off ₹122 crore from the bank.

The first accused, Hitesh Pravinchandra Mehta, 57, allegedly conspired with another unknown person to embezzle ₹122 crore in cash from the safe deposit box of the Mumbai-based New India Co-operative Bank.

Of the total amount, ₹70 crore was found in possession of Dharmesh Jayantilal Paun, a builder.

Mr. Paun had received ₹1.75 crore from Mr. Mehta between May and December 2024 and ₹50 lakh in January 2025, said the police. Unnathan Arunachalam, alias Arunbhai, is a wanted accused in the case, the police said.

“The amount involved in the said crime is the deposit amount of the general public and as a large number of people have been affected due to the act of the accused, the said crime is of a serious nature, so the crime should be thoroughly investigated,” the police said in the remand application.

In the dock: Hitesh Mehta being taken by EOW officers after a court in Mumbai sent him to five-day police custody. ANI

Mr. Mehta was being evasive to questions about the embezzled amount. However, his involvement in the crime was established, the police added.

While seeking remand of the accused, the police said further investigation was necessary to find out the people who helped him in actively embezzling the cash from the Goregaon and Prabhadevi branch offices of the bank.

A case under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) was registered in the early hours of Saturday based on a complaint from the Acting Chief Accounting Officer of the bank, Devarshi Shishirkumar Ghosh.

Advocates representing the accused told the media that he was being falsely implicated and that more investigation was needed.

The arrest follows the RBI restrictions on the bank’s operations due to lack of liquidity.

The central bank further superseded the Board and appointed a three-member committee to administer the entity for 12 months.

The banking regulator had also directed the cooperative bank to not allow customers to withdraw money and assure them that the deposits would be insured up to ₹5 lakh. The news of the curbs led to a bank run in some of its branches in Mumbai.

Kuki-Zo MLAs seek road map for peace, justice in Manipur

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Manipur’s Kuki-Zo legislators are upbeat about the return of peace and normalcy in the ethnic violence-hit State under President’s Rule.

Seven of the 10 MLAs belonging to the group of tribes are from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

“While acknowledging the Centre’s decision to place the Assembly under suspended animation, we express hope that the Government of India would lay out a comprehensive political road map for peace and justice under a negotiated settlement,” the MLAs said in a joint statement issued on Sunday.

“We also look forward to time-bound measures to end the sufferings that the conflict-affected and internally displaced people continue to undergo,” it said.

The Kuki-Zo MLAs fled the Meitei-dominated Imphal Valley after ethnic violence broke out on May 3, 2023, and are continuing to stay away.

They proposed a “separate administration” for the Kuki-Zos, maintaining that it would be difficult for members of their community to co-exist with the Meiteis.

The Manipur Police are investigating a case based on complaints about fraudulent calls made to the MLAs, apparently “to influence and mislead” them “by exploiting the ongoing political situation in the State”.

Tight grip: Security personnel began crack down on radicals since the President’s Rule.

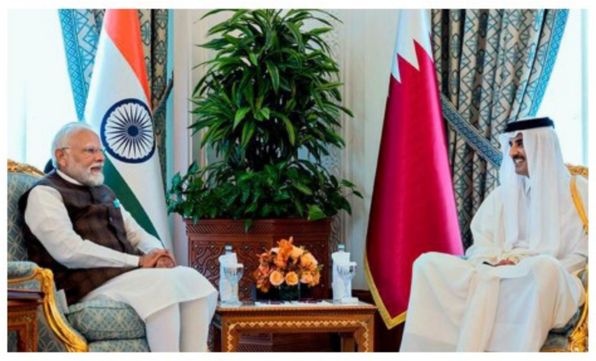
“...an FIR [first information report] has been registered in Imphal police station and necessary legal action is underway. It is hereby warned that those involved in such fraudulent activities will face strict and strong legal consequences. An investigation is in full swing,” the police posted on social media platform X.

In coordination with the Army and paramilitary forces, the State police began cracking down on extremists and armed radicals since the imposition of President’s Rule.

More than two dozen members of various armed groups have been caught so far.

One such operation in the Churachandpur district led to the arrest of seven suspected members of the Kuki National Army, an extremist group. A cache of arms, including AK-47 rifles, was seized from them.

Ahead of Qatar Emir’s visit, calls grow for Navy official’s return



Strategic visit: Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani with Narendra Modi during their meeting in Doha on February 15, 2024. AFP

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

A day before the arrival of the Qatari Emir to India for an important visit, the seven former Indian Navy officials who returned last year after being imprisoned for nearly 18 months in Doha, have called for the repatriation of the last remaining Indian who is stuck in the Gulf sheikhdom.

Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani is scheduled to reach New Delhi on Monday ahead of an important summit of five Arab States in Saudi Arabia’s capital Riyadh where U.S. President Donald Trump’s Gaza formula will be in focus as Qatar continues to play an important role in the Israel-Palestine crisis.

“As India awaits the arrival of HH the Amir of Qatar on his State visit, we look forward to a constructive deliberation to facilitate the return of our colleague, viz, Cdr Purnendu Tiwary from Qatar. This would help bring in closure while aiding a reunion of Cdr Purnendu Tiwary with his family and especially with his aged mother,” a statement issued by the seven former Naval officers stated on Sunday.

The ordeal of the eight former Indian Navy officials began in August 2022 when Qatari authorities arrested them. Neither India nor Qatar revealed the precise charges against them who were employed with Dahra Global, a company that specialised in supplying defence and security-related items to the Government of Qatar.

Subsequently, the men were given death sentences in October 2023. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) had described the death penalty as “deeply shocking” and subsequently appealed for reconsideration.

Qatar granted consular access to the men and in December 2023, the death sentence was commuted to imprisonment of varying timespan. Captain Navtej Singh Gill, Captain Saurabh Vasisht, Captain Birendra Kumar Verma, Commander Sugunakar Pakala, Commander Sanjeev Gupta, Commander Amit Nagpal, and Sailor Ragesh returned in February 2024, just days before Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a visit to Qatar. The eighth person, Commander Purnendu Tiwary, remained in Doha.

Sheikh Tamim’s India visit comes against the backdrop of growing energy trade between India and Qatar and strong people-to-people relations.

Indian Ocean Region is witnessing a sharp churning, says Jaishankar

Suhasini Haidar
MUSCAT

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar spoke to Bangladesh Foreign Affairs Adviser Touhid Hossain in Muscat on Sunday, in a meeting aimed at defusing tensions and addressing “challenges” between New Delhi and Dhaka over attacks on minorities and the continued stay of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in India.

Mr. Jaishankar, who was attending the eighth Indian Ocean Conference, warned of a “churning” in the region. He met his counterparts from a number of countries, including Foreign Ministers Arzu Deuba Rana of Nepal, D.N. Dhungyel of Bhutan, Vijitha Herath of Sri Lanka, Abdulla Khaleel of the Maldives, and Abbas Araghchi of Iran, those of Mauritius and Brunei, and his Omani co-host Syed Badr Hamad Al Busaidi.

In a statement, the Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the two leaders had noted that a number of regular bilateral exchanges had been held between the two countries in the past few months and a meeting of border guards is expected this week.

“The [Foreign Ministers] hoped that various border-related issues would be discussed and resolved during the meeting. Both sides recognised the challenges the two neighbours are facing in terms of bilateral relations and discussed about the necessity to work together to address those,” the statement said.

Regional ties: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with his counterparts during the 8th Indian Ocean Conference in Muscat. ANI

Mr. Jaishankar, who last met Mr. Hossain in September 2024 on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, said the “conversation was focused on [the India-Bangladesh] bilateral relationship, as also on BIMSTEC [Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation]”.

The reference to BIMSTEC is significant as the next summit of the regional grouping will be held in Bangkok on April 2-4, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus are expected to attend.

‘Coordinated flotilla’

Addressing the IOC’s inaugural session, which included Ministers of more than 25 countries, and is co-hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs this year with the Oman Ministry of Foreign Affairs and organised by India Foundation, Mr. Jaishankar said the Indian Ocean was witnessing a “sharp churning” due to developments in West Asia and the Indo-Pacific, calling for a “coordinated flotilla” to develop the region.

“In the Middle East/West Asia, there is a serious conflict under way with the potential for further escalation and complication,” he said. “At the same time, longstanding issues are being revisited, sometimes with a radically different approach,” he added, in an oblique reference to U.S. President Donald Trump’s statements on Gaza, where he has proposed moving nearly two million Gazans to Egypt and Jordan, and the U.S. taking charge of redeveloping the area that has been bombarded by Israel.

The proposal has been rejected by most countries in the Gulf region, including Oman.

Speaking in another session, Iran Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi took aim at the U.S. over Mr. Trump’s recent executive orders to impose “maximum pressure” on Iran and reviewing all sanctions waivers, including the waiver for Chabahar port.

In his speech, Mr. Jaishankar said India had a number of initiatives to help promote cooperation in the Indian Ocean region, citing India’s $4-billion package for Sri Lanka, and vaccine donations, while being a “first responder” during natural disasters such as earthquakes, oil spills and other crises in the IOR.

After a meeting with the Sri Lankan Minister, Mr. Jaishankar said India ws “committed to the economic recovery and progress of Sri Lanka”.

Pak. troops opened fire at LoC: Army

The Hindu Bureau
JAMMU

A fresh exchange of fire was reported on the Line of Control (LoC) in the Pir Panjal Valley’s Poonch on Sunday. No casualties were reported.

“Around 11 a.m., Pakistani troops opened fire from small arms on an Indian post across the LoC in Poonch sector. The fire was retaliated appropriately by the Indian Army. No casualties to our side,” an Army official said.

The incident took place in Poonch’s Gulpur sector.

Two soldiers were killed and two injured in skirmishes on the LoC in the Jammu division earlier this month. Two soldiers, including a Captain, were killed in Akhnoor Sector, while one soldier was injured in Rajouri and another in Poonch.

Since India and Pakistan renewed the ceasefire agreement in 2020, the Jammu region has witnessed frequent firing incidents, including close to the LoC this month.

Several incidents also involved infiltrating militants, officials said.

Railways forms committee to investigate Delhi stampede

Railway officials attempted to keep the news of deaths under wraps and took 20 hours since the stampede to confirm that the tragedy had indeed occurred, sources say; conflicting statements arose from multiple official spokespersons

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

Without a break: Crowds return on Sunday to the New Delhi railway station platform, the site of Saturday's stampede. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The Railways has formed a two-member high-level administrative grade committee to investigate the stampede that occurred on Saturday night at the New Delhi Railway Station, officials in the Railway Ministry said on Sunday.

The committee of Narsingh Deo, Principal Chief Commercial Manager, Northern Railways, and Pankaj Gangwar, Principal Chief Security Commissioner, will investigate the stampede that claimed 18 lives, including of four children and a septuagenarian woman.

Sources in the Railways told *The Hindu* that despite repeated attempts to make officials understand that information about the deceased should be shared in a swift and transparent manner, the Railways tried to keep the news of deaths under wraps on Saturday.

"There were contradictory responses issued by the Railway officials, with an official spokesperson in the Railway Ministry saying that the injured were rushed to the hospital, but CPRO Northern Railways Himanshu Upadhyay initially maintained that 'stampede news was a rumour', until later when Delhi's Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena said on X that he condoled the deaths," an official said.

Twenty-four minutes past Sunday midnight, Mr. Saxena's statement on X was edited to remove the mention of deaths.

By this time, the Chief Casualty Medical Officer at LNJP Hospital had confirmed the deaths.

However, at half past midnight, the Press Information Bureau officials of the Railways refrained from mentioning casualties.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who was the first to post a condolence message on X at 16 minutes past midnight, stuck to the fact that deaths had occurred. "I am extremely pained by the loss of lives due to stampede on Railway Platform...," he said.

The statement by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on X at seven minutes to 1 a.m. said, "Injured were taken to hospital..."

While the Railways still did not confirm that there were deaths, at four minutes to 1 a.m., Prime Minister Narendra Modi took to X to say, "Distressed by the stampede at New Delhi Railway Station. My thoughts are with all those who have lost their loved ones..."

It took about 20 hours since the tragedy for the Railways to officially confirm the death toll. Despite repeated requests, the Railway Ministry did not issue an official statement until 6.45 p.m. on Sunday. The Railways accepted in the official statement that there had been a stampede in which 18 persons were killed and 15 injured.

Sources told *The Hindu* that the Railways quickly flung into action and started distributing *ex gratia* compensation in cash – ₹10 lakh each to the kin of the 18 people dead – since 4 a.m. on Sunday even before announcing the amount in the official statement.

Three grievously injured persons were given ₹2.5 lakh each, while 12 with minor injuries received ₹1 lakh each.

"There was clearly overcrowding, and each platform can hold between 2,000-3,000 passengers. But there were way more passengers during that time leading to congestion," a source said.

As crowd swelled, review meeting on safety 'kept top railway officials busy'

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

Close shave: Police personnel pull a woman to safety at the New Delhi railway station on Saturday. ANI

As the crowd started swelling at the New Delhi Railway Station on Saturday eventually leading to a stampede, top railway officials were busy at a meeting discussing safety aspects, sources said.

On Saturday, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Railway Board convened a meeting of all General Managers, Divisional Railway Managers, and other senior officials through video conferencing to discuss safety-related issues. The meeting originally planned for February 8 was rescheduled. It commenced at 10.30 a.m. and went on for about five hours, railway sources said.

"We had to prepare data and action-taken reports for the meeting well in advance. After the hectic review meeting which was held on a weekend, most of the officers took a break from routine work. By the time the SOS was sounded in New Delhi, an unmanageable crowd was already in... It was too late to close the entry points," a senior railway officer involved in the operation of special trains for the Kumbh Mela in Northern Railway said.

Even after the meeting was over by around 3 p.m., the instructions given and decisions made by the top railway management in the safety review meeting had to be communicated down the line and officers continued to be busy till late on Saturday.

The Railway Protection Force and Government Railway Police should have issued an alert on seeing the unusual crowd congregating on two platforms. Instead of taking decisions after a crisis, steps should have been taken to avert the situation. But all decision-making senior officials were busy in the meeting throughout the day, the officer said.

In stations, access control is the most important aspect for regulating the crowd. Once the crowd enters the premises, it becomes a challenge to handle with the railway station being a closed structure.

The officer, who did not want to be quoted, said that once there is a large gathering of passengers on the platform, the only option left is to bring the train in to clear the rush. "But it takes more than an hour to bring a rake on to the platform from the yard as the shunting speed is only 15 kmph."

Shubhranshu, former Chief Administrative Officer of Rail Wheel Plant, Bela, said the DRMs of Lucknow and Prayagraj were handling a much larger crowd of pilgrims with less infrastructure.

He said it was a pity that Northern Railway, specifically the Delhi Division, which had a tested and proven protocol of crowd handling, "goofed up" this time. "Their crowd-management practices have been honed over decades of handling even bigger crowds going for Chhath, Durga Puja, and Holi in exactly the same direction – east. It is not that the Kumbh rush happened only on February 15... crowds were gathering and travelling for over a month now."

With poor planning on train operations and crowd management, this incident was waiting to happen, Mr. Shubhranshu said.

Opposition accuses government of mismanagement

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Rahul Gandhi

Condoling the death of 18 passengers at the New Delhi railway station, the Opposition blamed the Union government for mismanagement, and asked why crowd-control measures were not in place. They accused the government of trying to under-report the number of the dead and injured.

Calling the incident "distressing", Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said that it once again highlighted the failure of railway authorities and the "insensitivity" of the government. "Given the large number of devotees heading to Prayagraj, better arrangements should have been made at the station. The government and administration should ensure that no one loses their life due to mismanagement and negligence," he said.

'Release the number'

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge accused the government of trying to hide the truth. In a post on X, hours after the incident, he said the government must release the number of the deceased and injured, and the identity of the missing people should be established. Echoing Mr. Kharge's views, Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal said the incident showed that the government was "utterly incompetent and is only capable of PR, not actual management".

He posed a series of questions on X, "The Government has again tried to downplay the situation. When will we know the exact figures of the dead and injured? Why were crowd control measures not in place? Why did the railways not run special trains when they knew this crowd was to be anticipated in light of the Mahakumbh?"

'Vaishnaw must resign'

Trinamool MP Saket Gokhale said that for hours after the stampede, the Railways kept denying the incident, calling it a rumour. "This was a brazen attempt at cover-up until the bodies started showing up. Modi's part-time Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, yet again, has blood on his hands," Mr. Gokhale said, calling for Mr. Vaishnaw's resignation.

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka Chaturvedi also called for accountability. "It is extremely unfortunate and is the responsibility of the Indian Railways and the Railway Minister, who denies accountability for the incident."

The Aam Aadmi Party's Rajya Sabha member Raghav Chadha said the condition of the passengers in Indian Railways was similar to "potato sacks stuffed in trains".

"If by any chance a passenger gets to sit in the washroom of our trains, he considers himself lucky," he said.

After a night of trauma, frantic search for the missing; porters recount the dance of death

Samridhi Tewari
NEW DELHI

An eerie silence gripped platform no. 14 at the New Delhi Railway Station on Sunday afternoon, after a stampede left 18 persons dead and many injured on Saturday night.

In a tragic reminder that normalcy was yet to return, a man was seen frantically searching for his missing wife on various platforms of the station. Holding a photo of Tara Devi, Gupteshwar Yadav said he had planned to visit Prayagraj with his brother's family to take a dip at the Sangam.

"I lost my wife when we were caught in the unexpected crowd on the overbridge. We were gasping for breath, I could not hold on to her hand, and it took me and my brother's family hours to get out of the platform amid the chaos. Police personnel told me they will look for Tara," he said.

Inconsolable kin: Family members of a victim of the stampede at Lok Nayak Hospital in New Delhi on Sunday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Platform 14, where shoes, clothes, and other personal belongings of passengers lay scattered, was cleared by Sunday morning. Police personnel were deployed in large numbers at the station to manage the crowd headed for Prayagraj.

Porters at the station said the dance of death took place between 9.15 p.m. and 9.30 p.m. A few of them had helped the passengers carry luggage when they saw the sudden crowd surge. Most lent a helping hand in the rescue efforts. They were seen carrying the critically injured on their carts.

Some porters on the night shift said the station had never seen a crowd like that.

Shopkeepers at the station said people were pushing against each other and many struggled to breathe. They said railway police personnel were not posted to manage the surge.

"No crowd management was in place and an announcement was made that the train that was to arrive on platform 12 will be arriving on platform 16. So the crowd on both sides panicked, and the chaos led to a stampede..." an eyewitness said.

A porter, who has been working at the station since 1981, said, "After the announcement, the crowd panicked. People collided and fell on escalators and stairs, and even porters were trying to control the crowd. We carried at least 15 bodies to the ambulance."

Another porter, Jitesh Meena, said he saw a teary-eyed man walk out of the station holding his lifeless daughter. His wife was missing. "He didn't have any money; so we got together and paid his auto fare. We did as much as we could to rescue people, this was a very difficult situation," he added.

Digambar Mandal, employed at a bookstore, was back at work on Sunday. "The incident happened barely a few metres from my shop. Women wearing saris tripped and fell while running and there was no way out. It was such a traumatic night," Mr. Mandal said.

Mamata calls for careful planning, management

Press Trust of India
KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday expressed grief over the loss of lives in a stampede at the New Delhi Railway Station, and stressed the need for careful planning and management for the safety of people.

"This painful incident highlights the importance of careful planning and management, especially when it comes to the safety of citizens," Ms. Banerjee said on X. "Pilgrims on their way to the Maha Kumbh should have been met with proper support and facilities, not distress. It is essential to ensure that such journeys are safe and well-organised," she said.

"My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families, and I pray for the swift recovery of the injured," she added.

Bihar mourns nine victims; Nitish announces relief

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

When her parents and a young relative left their village in Samastipur district of Bihar for the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj, Kajal Kumari had no inkling that she would never see them alive again.

However, in the early hours of Sunday, she got the news that her father, Vijay Sah, 45; and mother, Krishna Devi, 40; and 11-year-old Suruchi Kumari were killed in a stampede at the New Delhi Railway Station. She has not been able to control her tears since then.

Of the 18 who were killed in the stampede, nine are from Bihar.

"My father and mother, along with another relative, had gone to take a dip in the Sangam during the Maha Kumbh," a teary-eyed Ms. Kumari told presspersons at her village of Srichandpur Kothia. They first went from Samastipur to Delhi, where Ms. Kumari's brother stays, and then planned to go to Prayagraj by boarding a train at the New Delhi station.

"Around 1 a.m., I got the call that all three were killed in the stampede. It is a complete failure of the Railways. Had there been proper management at the railway station, this incident would not have taken place," she said.

The kin of three victims from Samastipur district of Bihar struggle to fight back tears.

Apart from Suruchi Kumari, two more children from Bihar were killed in the stampede: Pooja Kumari, 8, from Nawada, and Neeraj Kumar, 12, from Vaishali.

Neeraj had gone to Delhi with his uncle and aunt, who were injured in the stampede.

"Many people had gone from our village to take a holy dip in the Kumbh and my son was with his uncle and aunt. He was the youngest of our three children. How will I survive without him?" his mother, Kamla Devi, said. "Why didn't the Railways make foolproof arrangements to handle the crowd," the grieving mother asked.

Pappu Kumar lost his mother-in-law, Poonam Devi, 40. "We were going from Delhi to Danapur, and I reached the railway station by 5 p.m. The train was scheduled to depart at 9.05 p.m. There was no train on the platform at that time when suddenly, the crowd surged," he said.

"I was about to board the Magadh Express but it was full and I had decided not to take the train in that situation. I was planning to return home but this happened."

The other victims from Bihar were Aaha Devi, 79, from Buxar; Lalita Devi, 35, from Patna; and Shanti Devi, 40 from Nawada.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced ₹2 lakh each for the kin of the deceased from Bihar from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund, along with ₹50,000 for the injured.

Rashtriya Janata Dal chief and former Railway Minister Lalu Prasad alleged that the stampede took place due to the mismanagement of the Railways. He said the Railway Ministry should take responsibility for the tragedy. He took a jibe at the Maha Kumbh, saying "*Koi matlab hai Kumbh ka, faltu hai* (The Kumbh is meaningless, useless)".

INBRIEF

Change of guard ceremony to be held in a new format

The change of guard ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan will now be held in a new format, featuring an elaborate visual and musical performance against the backdrop of the presidential palace, an official statement said on Sunday. The new format includes military drills by troops and horses of the President's Bodyguard, along with personnel from the Ceremonial Guard Battalion and the Ceremonial Military Brass Band. President Droupadi Murmu witnessed the inaugural ceremony in its new format on Sunday, the statement issued by her office said. The ceremony will be open to visitors from February 22. Visitors can reserve their slots at https://visit.rashtrapatibhavan.gov.in. PTI

Two killed, five injured in fire in Mumbai high-rise

Two people were killed in a fire on the ground floor of a high-rise building at Vadgadi in Mumbai on Sunday morning. "The fire was confined to electric wiring, electric installations in a common meter box, and electric wiring in the common passage on the ground floor of a 11-storey building," said the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation in a statement. Seven people were injured in the accident, of whom two died, three were admitted, and two discharged, according to doctors. The Mumbai Fire Brigade, Mumbai Police, and BEST staff were mobilised and the fire was extinguished at about 6.31 a.m.

U.K. will always be India's reliable partner: Minister

U.K.'s Minister of State for Defence Vernon Coaker hails the country's new 'DP–I' programme; citing projects and joint ventures announced in Aero India, he says cooperation 'will only grow'

Dinakar Peri
BENGALURU

The United Kingdom's Minister of State for Defence, Vernon Coaker, said on Sunday that his country will be a reliable partner for India "now and in the future". He further emphasised that the new Defence Partnership, India (DP-I), a dedicated programme office within the U.K.'s Ministry of Defence, demonstrated that from the U.K.'s perspective, "we should do more with India".

At Aero India in Bengaluru last week, India and the U.K. announced a series of joint ventures in the defence domain, which he termed as practical steps in this direction.

The DP-I located in London will serve as a one-stop shop for strengthening bilateral defence collaboration between the two countries. "Co-production is the way India is looking and we want to be part of that," Mr. Coaker, responsible for international relations and diplomacy, said in a conversation with *The Hindu* at Aero India. "India is a sovereign country and it will make its decisions in its best interest… My coming here is a statement by the U.K. government that we are a reliable partner both now and in the future…"

Official talks: Vernon Coaker with U.K. High Commissioner Lindy Cameron at Aero India in Bengaluru. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Referring to the various announcements made at the airshow as "initial numbers", the visiting Minister said the cooperation and the numbers will only grow.

At Aero India, Thales U.K. and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) signed a contract for Laser Beam Riding Man-portable Air Defence Systems (LBRMs), with an initial batch of STARStreak high-velocity missiles and launchers to be delivered to the Indian Army this year as part of the deal.

The two companies also announced a collaboration to produce Lightweight Multirole Missiles (LMMs). Further, MBDA U.K. and BDL are working on the installation of a first-of-its-kind Advanced Short-Range Air to Air Missile (ASRAAM) assembly and test facility in Hyderabad, which can also cater to exports.

Meanwhile, General Electric (GE) Vernova is developing a full-electric propulsion system for India's next generation of Land Platform Docks (LPD) and will develop a land-based test facility in India. "That's the whole point of strengthening India's ability to develop these projects and programmes by themselves," Mr. Coaker noted. This is in partnership with Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL), with the facility to be set up in Hyderabad to deliver the LPDs in water by 2030.

Towards this, India and the U.K. signed a Statement of Intent. These initiatives build manufacturing capability in India and fits with the overall objective of achieving self reliance, the Minister observed.

The Minister stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his U.K. counterpart Keir Starmer actually agreed to refresh the comprehensive strategic partnership, referring to their meeting in November 2024 on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in Brazil, where the two leaders reaffirmed their commitment for the partnership.

The U.K. carrier strike group is set to be on deployment to the Indian Ocean this year during which it is scheduled to visit India.

'Announcement of U.S. trade pact gives relief to businesses'

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Piyush Goyal

The announcement to negotiate a bilateral trade agreement between India and the U.S. has boosted business confidence in both countries, as it can help further strengthen economic ties by leveraging their competitive strengths, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Sunday.

During the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Washington, India and the U.S. announced to more than double the two-way commerce to $500 billion by 2030 and negotiate the first tranche of a mutually beneficial, multi-sector bilateral trade agreement (BTA) by fall of 2025.

'Work as two friends'

"The Prime Minister has brought back with him an agreement or an understanding to enter into a trade deal by fall of this year. I think, it gives a lot of confidence and a lot of relief to every business person in the U.S. and in India who believe that together, we can truly transform world trade, together with our competitive strengths in different areas, we can truly work as two friends, as two partners for progress and prosperity," Mr. Goyal said.

Normally in a free trade agreement, two trading partners either eliminate or significantly reduce customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them. Besides, they also ease norms to promote trade in services and boost investments.

During the first term of U.S. President Donald Trump, the two countries had discussed a mini-trade deal, but it was shelved by the Joe Biden administration as they were not in favour of such pacts.

Mr. Goyal also said that India is expanding and forging new partnerships across the world with new trade agreements with the developed world including with Australia, the UAE, and EFTA bloc.

DMK MP's Bill revives debate on quota in judicial appointments

D. Suresh Kumar
CHENNAI

P. Wilson

The debate on the need for introducing reservation in the appointment of judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts has been revived by the recent introduction of the Constitutional (Amendment) Bill, 2024 by Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam Rajya Sabha member P. Wilson.

The Bill seeks to amend the Constitution to provide due representation for members of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, women, and religious minorities in the appointment of judges in proportion to their population and to bring timeline, transparency, and allow State government opinions in judicial appointments.

According to Mr. Wilson, judicial appointments must be made keeping in mind social diversity within the institution.

In the Bill, he has sought framing of a Memorandum of Procedure for appointment of judges of the Supreme Court in consultation with the Chief Justice of India setting out the timelines and procedure including identifying, assessing, recommending, appointing suitable candidates. He has sought consultation by the Centre with the respective State governments while appointing the Chief Justice or judge of any High Court.

Will U.S.'s F-35 stealth fighter jets fit into IAF's future plans?

NEWS ANALYSIS

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Early last week, the fifth-generation fighter aircraft (FGFA) of both Russia and the U.S. – the Su-57 and the F-35, respectively – were on display at the Aero India airshow in Bengaluru. Later that week, U.S. President Donald Trump, standing next to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was on a visit to Washington DC, announced that the U.S. would be increasing military sales to India "by many billions of dollars" and was also paving the way to "ultimately" provide India with the F-35 stealth fighters.

The announcement has created a flutter in India about the possible procurement of the jet for the Indian Air Force (IAF), and it comes at a time when the country faces a huge gap in fighter induction and modernisation. However, responding to questions, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri was quick to point out that there is a process to be followed for military procurement and that the formal process in this regard has not started "as yet".

The biggest question is how will it impact India's own fighter development programmes, which, though behind schedule, are crucial for achieving self-reliance.

The F-35 is a tri-service, multinational, single-seat, single-engine strike fighter aircraft expected to be in service well into the 2080s. It has three variants – the F-35A conventional take-off and landing for the Air Force, the F-35B short take-off/vertical landing for the Marine Corps, and the F-35C aircraft carrier variant for the Navy and the Marine Corps.

"It is too early to say anything very definitively, but whatever the decision may be, it must be ensured that the indigenous programmes are shielded and their timely realisation prioritised," one official said on the condition of anonymity. A similar view was expressed by many.

Mean machine: The U.S. F-35 stealth fighter during Aero India in Bengaluru last week. MURALI KUMAR K.

Key challenges

While the offer of F-35 means the U.S. is no longer concerned with the Russian S-400 air defence system that India operates, the jet will present significant challenges in integration in India's military architecture, which is a mix of Indian, Russian, French, Israeli, and other systems.

To date, the F-35 programme has delivered over 990 aircraft to the U.S. services, international partners, and foreign military sales customers, according to a 2024 report of the U.S. Governmental Accountability Office. "The programme is also more than a decade delayed and has cost $209 billion more than originally planned," the report said, highlighting that none of the F-35 variants are meeting availability targets.

A key point is that the F-35 is a single-seater aircraft, contrary to the IAF's preference for twin-seater jets. One of the reasons the earlier attempt at co-development of the FGFA with Russia was dropped was that the jet had been developed in a single-seat configuration and the Russian proposal for the development of a twin-seater variant came with a hefty price tag. So how will the F-35 proposal, if and when that takes shape, fit the IAF's operational profile?

Currently, the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-Mk1A project – 83 jets have been ordered and order for 97 more are in the pipeline – has been delayed partly due to developmental issues and engine delays.

The jet, like the LCA-Mk1, is powered by the GE F404 engine and deliveries have been delayed by two years. At Aero India, officials said that GE has resolved its supply chain issue and deliveries are expected from March.

Further, there is the LCA-Mk2, a much larger and more capable aircraft, the first prototype of which is expected to roll out by 2025-end and make first flight in the first quarter of 2026, according to Jitendra J. Jadhav, Director-General, Aeronautical Development Agency.

Then there is India's own FGFA in the pipeline, the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft, which is envisaged to be ready for induction by 2034-35.

Apart from the indigenous programmes, there is the Multi-Role Fighter Aircraft (MRFA) tender for the acquisition of 114 foreign jet to be manufactured in India under licence.

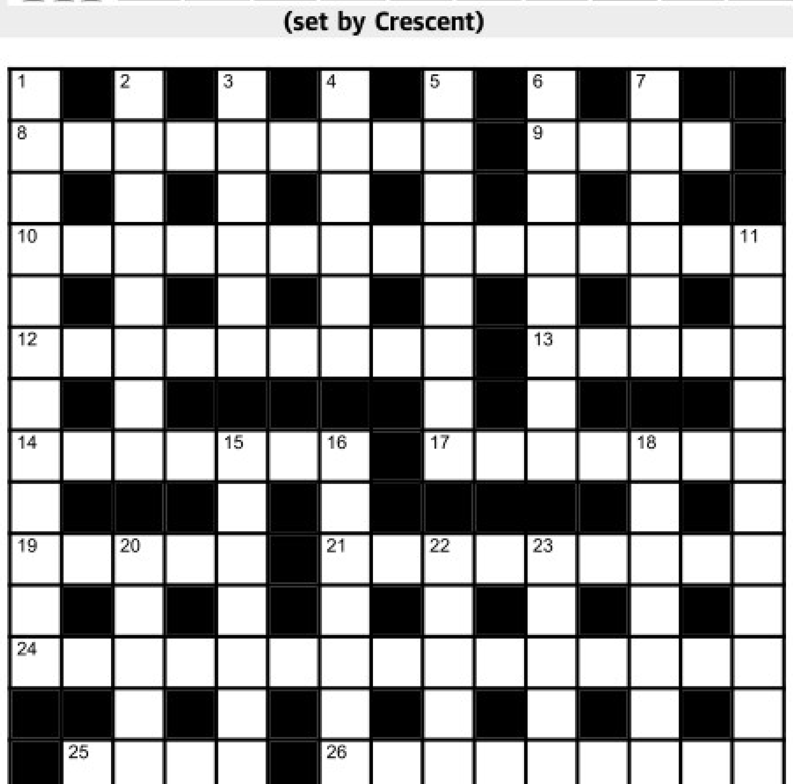
Given this long line-up, it remains to be seen how the F-35 will fit into the IAF's future plans. India has never operated a U.S. fighter and the F-35, being the apex of U.S. technology threshold, will also bring with it stringent U.S. regulations and oversight.

TH CROSSWORD+ 14410

(set by Crescent)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

8 Brilliant English fellow thrice inspiring university lecturer (9)
9 Dash from cycling path (4)
10 Perhaps I irritated dog on couch (9,6)
12 Unknown men gatecrashing ask her daughter out (4,5)
13 Otter aimlessly circling some marshy land (5)
14 Slippery character turns round giving a suggestive look (7)
17 Time limits to adjust lines of course bearing (7)
19 Shade of green over lead (5)
21 Fool mostly cut off remains without money (3,2,4)
24 Swank is essentially sarky conceit, anyway, to be difficult to accept (5,2,4,4)
25 Rabbit's tail docked by son (4)
26 Test by touching leg around point with a cast (9)

Down

1 Ice collapsed, running minor slips (12)
2 Simpleton lacking answer, old chaps damn sure (2,6)
3 Chiefly schist, partly sandstone deposit (6)
4 Hollow entertainment in dreary diversion (6)
5 Got dress designed for dull people (8)
6 When one's close to fire, best run to a window (8)
7 One snatching another from highest point on hill (6)
11 Attack banks in sweet spot of holy ground to obtain sufficient money (5,3,4)
15 Kites ace shot make a camel spin? (3-5)
16 Adults joke about wearing G-strings (5-3)
18 Fearless crook in a fraud (8)
20 Arctic seals duck after one died in folly (6)
22 Can king without Government support spend a penny? (6)
23 Hundreds of thousands providing returns of revenue (6)

SUDOKU

					3	9		2
	8				9	4		
4		1			6		5	
		8		7		5		
	7	9				2	3	
		2		3		7		
	2		8			6		5
		4	6				9	
9		5	3					

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

I	N	C	R	E	A	S	E	■	A	G	I	S	M	S
M	■	H	■	R	■	W	■	■	■	O	■	P	■	A
P	R	O	V	I	D	E	D	■	G	I	B	R	A	N
U	■	R	■	C	■	A	■	H	■	N	■	I	■	I
G	U	A	R	A	N	T	E	E	■	G	E	N	E	T
N	■	L	■	■	■	E	■	L	■	R	■	T	■	I
■	■	■	U	S	E	R	■	P	L	A	Y	E	R	S
C	■	A	■	T	■	■	■	■	■	T	■	R	■	E
O	P	T	I	O	N	S	■	B	E	E	T	■	■	■
M	■	N	■	R	■	U	■	U	■	■	■	P	■	I
P	H	O	N	Y	■	M	A	L	A	Y	A	L	A	M
U	■	C	■	L	■	P	■	L	■	O	■	I	■	P
T	R	O	P	I	C	■	T	R	I	G	R	A	P	H
E	■	S	■	N	■	■	■	U	■	I	■	N	■	A
R	A	T	H	E	R	■	I	N	O	S	I	T	O	L

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

1	5	7	8	6	9	3	2	4
9	3	2	5	4	7	1	6	8
6	8	4	2	3	1	9	7	5
2	6	5	7	1	3	4	8	9
7	9	3	4	8	2	5	1	6
4	1	8	6	9	5	7	3	2
3	2	9	1	5	8	6	4	7
5	7	6	3	2	4	8	9	1
8	4	1	9	7	6	2	5	3

FAITH

Birth of Divya Prabandham

The first three Azhvars, namely Poigai Azhvar, Bhootatazhvar and Peyazhvar, travelled from one place to another, to worship at various Vishnu temples. The Lord brought them together in a place known as Thirukkovilur, said V.S. Karunakarachariar in a discourse. Poigai Azhvar was the first to arrive in Thirukkovilur. It was raining heavily, and he needed a place to spend the night in. He found a small room, where he could lie down. But soon Bhootatazhvar also arrived at the same place, and now there was enough room for the two of them to sit.

Peyazhvar was the next to arrive, and when he entered the room, there was standing space only for the three of them. But in that cramped space, they sensed a fourth presence crushing them. To see who this new entrant was, they had to light a lamp. They had neither oil nor wick to light one. But they lit lamps that only the Azhvars with their divine powers could light. Poigai Azhvar used the earth as a lamp, the waters of the ocean as ghee, and the sun's rays as the flame. Bhootatazhvar's lamp was lit with his love serving as the lamp. His enthusiasm was the ghee. His thoughts became the wick. The lamp he lit was the lamp of knowledge. In the light shed by these two unique lamps, Peyazhvar saw the Supreme One, and remarked that he had seen Sri and the golden body of Lord Narayana. One of the many meanings of Sri is 'She who listens.' Mahalakshmi listens to our pleas and conveys them to the Lord. But how did the Azhvar see a golden hued Vishnu? Lakshmi was on His chest, and Her radiance made His body glow like gold. Thus it was, that the Divya Prabandhams were born on a stormy night in Thirukkovilur.

MONEYWISE

D-Street Fauna

ANIMALFARM

Vaishali R. Venkat

Recently, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) barred financial influencer Asmitha Patel from capital markets for unregistered investment advisory services. It impounded ₹53.67 crore from her and five other entities and asked why a whopping ₹104.63 crore, collected as course fee, should not be seized as well.

Market buffs were taken aback; for, the YouTuber was often dubbed as a 'she-wolf' of the market and 'options queen' who, as per her claims, had mentored over one lakh investors across the globe. Amid the hullabaloo over the case, the one word that caught our attention was 'wolf.' It is not just bulls, bears and wolves, that are present in the market, but others from the animal kingdom too.

Fraudulent wolves

The most unscrupulous one, wolves, use unethical ways to mint money and extent of the crime would be such when it comes to light, the entire market would be jolted. In the 2013 Hollywood film *The Wolf of Wall Street*, infamous wolf Jordan Belfort and his band of broker cronies would manipulate the market and make a huge fortune by defrauding wealthy investors. Closer home, we have had the likes of Harshad Mehta and Ketan Parekh who duped lakhs of investors. of their savings. So, be careful with such wolves.

Greedy pigs

"Bulls make money, bears make money, pigs get slaughtered," is a popular *Wall Street* quote.

Risk-tolerant and impatient, they toss aside basic principles of investing and indulge in chasing a wild goose (unrealistic returns). Gripped with the greed of making quick profit, pig investors take excessive leverage from brokers and make huge losses.

For instance, let's say Shyam invests in ABXYZ stock. Though the stock doubles, Shyam would cling to it instead of selling a portion and realising some gain. What he failed to realise is the momentary price rise could be a short-term bubble.

When the bubble bursts, Shyam might have lost expected profit and even capital. Greed and fear result in failure in the market. If a stock's price rises, one must do thorough research and ponder on questions such as – why did it rise; how long the price might stay at this level; is the rise real or inflated; are there any good news about the stock?, etc. If one is unable to find valid reasons for a spike, it is better to book profits and get out.

Cautious chicken

These 'fearful' investors chicken out of stock market owing to risk aversion. They adopt a conservative approach, mostly investing in safer financial instruments. While they make minimal losses, they also miss out on inflation-beating returns. For instance, most senior citizens stay away from stocks, equating bourses to a casino. Afraid of losing their principal, they invest in conservative instruments like fixed deposits and government bonds.

Blind sheep

Known for a herd-like mentality, these investors follow the crowd, and often form the biggest chunk of the market. They do not have any investment knowledge or ideas of their own, and tend to blindly follow friends' or brokers' recommendations. They buy when others buy, sell when others sell, and won't wait for markets to recover from downturns.

Dabbling in the stock market might not be a good idea for them even if it may be for their friends. You can avoid being a Dalal Street sheep by assessing your investment goals, when you need your money back, do you want regular income, etc. Similarly, when a stock crashes, think twice before you sell out.

Ask yourself questions such as whether you need the money immediately; is the downturn transitory and if so, why; will there be a recovery in the near future?

There are more animals traversing the markets that we will explore soon.

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

Old tax regime: key benefits

- **Sec 80C:** Deductions of up to **₹1.5 lakh** for investments in instruments such as PPF, EPF, life insurance premiums
- **House Rent Allowance:** exemption for rent paid
- **Leave Travel Allowance:** exemption for travel expenses
- **Sec 24(b):** Deductions on home loan interest payments up to **₹2 lakh** per year
- **Sec 80D:** Taxpayers can claim deductions on medical insurance premium for themselves, families, and parents with a limit of **₹25,000** for self and family and an additional **₹50,000** for senior citizen parents
- **Sec 80E:** deductions on interest paid for education loans
- Donations to charitable institutions, interest income on savings accounts and senior citizens' bank deposits

ILLUSTRATION: SAAI

To switch or not to: The old IT regime vs the new

While the govt. is promoting the new tax regime with simplified tax slabs and lower rates, the old regime remains attractive for many taxpayers with its extensive exemptions and deductions

A MATTER OF CHOICE

Akhil Chandna
Sarthak Prashar

The Union Budget 2025 has once again brought the debate between the old and new tax regimes into focus. While the government continues to promote the new tax regime with simplified tax slabs and lower rates, the old tax regime remains attractive for many taxpayers due to extensive exemptions and deductions. With no changes made to the old tax regime in this year's Budget, taxpayers must carefully evaluate their financial situation to decide whether to stick with it or transition to the new system.

Opting for old regime

The old tax regime is available to all taxpayers, including salaried individuals, self-employed professionals, and business owners, regardless of income bracket. This allows a broad range of taxpayers to benefit from exemptions and deductions [See graphic] under this system, making it a viable option for many taxpayers.

This regime encourages savings and investments by offering deductions for various financial instruments, enabling taxpayers to plan finances as per long-term goals. For those with significant investments in eligible tax-saving schemes, the old regime can lead to higher savings compared to the new despite higher tax rates.

While the old tax regime offers numerous benefits, the new tax regime introduced simplifies taxation with reduced rates but fewer exemptions and deductions. Here are some key factors to consider before making a decision.

Income level and tax-saving Investments: Individuals with substantial investments in tax-saving instruments may find the old tax regime more beneficial. Conversely, those who do not invest heavily in such schemes might benefit from the lower rates of the new tax regime.

Simplicity and compliance: The new tax regime eliminates the need to track multiple deductions and exemptions, simplifying tax calculations and compliance. Those who prefer a straightforward tax approach might find it more appealing.

Tax liability comparison: Comparing tax liabilities under the two regimes can help determine which system results in greater savings, based on an individual's financial situation.

Revised tax slabs under new regime: Under the new regime, individuals with an income of up to ₹12 lakh are exempt from paying income tax via a mix of rebates and revised tax slabs. This makes the regime attractive for middle-income earners.

Marginal relief for higher earners: The new regime offers marginal relief to those earning a tad above ₹12 lakh, preventing sudden tax jump and making the transition to higher tax brackets smoother.

Restrictions on switching tax regimes Business owners & professionals: If a taxpayer with business income opts for the old regime after initially choosing new regime, they can switch back to the new regime only once in their lifetime. Once they revert , they cannot opt for the old regime again unless business income ceases.

Salaried individuals: They have the flexibility to switch between the two regimes every financial year, based on tax planning.

Impact on disposable income: The new tax regime aims at increasing disposable income by lowering tax liabilities. This can benefit middle-class taxpayers who prioritise higher take-home pay over long-term savings.

Long-term financial planning: Taxpayers must consider long-term financial goals before choosing a regime. The old regime may be more suitable for those focused on retirement planning, savings, and tax-efficient investments while the new regime is more attractive for those seeking immediate tax relief and a simplified process.

Conclusion

The decision to choose between the old and new tax regimes depends on individual financial circumstances, investment habits, and preferences for simplicity or tax-saving opportunities.

If maximising tax deductions through exemptions and deductions is a priority, the old tax regime remains a viable option.

If simplicity and lower tax rates are more important, the new regime offers an easier compliance process with reduced liabilities.

To make an informed choice, taxpayers should carefully evaluate their income, investment plans, and long-term financial goals. Calculating tax liabilities under both regimes can provide clarity on which system best aligns with their financial needs.

(Mr. Chandna is a partner, and Mr. Prashar is an associate director, at Grant Thornton Bharat LLP)

Personal Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
HDFC Bank	10.85-24.00	10,834-14,384	2,167-2,877	Up to Rs 6,500
Tata Capital	11.99 onwards	11,120 onwards	2,224 onwards	Up to 4%
State Bank of India	11.45-14.85	10,984-11,856	2,197-2,371	NIL
ICICI Bank	10.85-16.65	10,834-12,332	2,167-2,466	Up to 2%
Bank of Baroda	11.05-18.50	10,884-12,833	2,177-2,567	Up to 2% (Maximum Rs 10,000)
Axis Bank	11.10-22.00	10,896-13,809	2,179-2,762	Up to 2%
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.99-16.99	10,869-12,424	2,174-2,485	Up to 5%
Bank of India	11.85-16.20	10,084-12,212	2,217-2,442	Up to 1% (Minimum Rs 250 and Maximum Rs 10,000)
Canara Bank	10.95-16.40	10,859-12,266	2,172-2,453	Up to 0.50% (Maximum Rs 2,500)
Punjab National Bank	11.15-17.95	10,909-12,683	2,182-2,537	Up to 1%
HSBC Bank	10.15-16.00	10,660-12,159	2,132-2,432	Up to 2%
Federal Bank	11.49-14.49	10,994-11,762	2,199-2,352	Up to 3%
Union Bank of India	11.35-15.45	10,959-12,013	2,192-2,403	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 7,500)
Bajaj Finserv	10.00-31.00	10,624-16,485	2,125-3,297	Up to 3.93%
Punjab & Sind Bank	11.25-14.00	10,934-11,634	2,187-2,327	0.50%-1%
South Indian Bank	12.85-20.60	11,338-13,414	2,268-2,683	Up to 2%
UCO Bank	12.45-12.85	11,236-11,338	2,247-2,268	Up to 1% (Minimum Rs 750)
IDFC First Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	2%
Bank of Maharashtra	10.00-12.80	10,624-11,325	2,125-2,265	1% (Max. Rs 10,000)
Karnataka Bank	13.72	11,562	2,312	Up to 2% (Min. Rs 2,500; Max. Rs 8,500)
IndusInd Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 3.5%

Car Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
Union Bank of India	8.70 - 10.45	10,307 - 10,735	Up to Rs 1,000
Punjab National Bank	8.75 - 10.60	10,319 - 10,772	Up to 0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 1,500)
Bank of Baroda	8.90 - 12.40	10,355 - 11,224	Up to Rs 750
UCO Bank	8.45 onwards	10,246 onwards	NIL
State Bank of India	9.10-10.15	10,403-10,660	NIL
IDBI Bank	8.90-9.70	10,355 - 10,550	Rs 2,500
Bank of Maharashtra*	8.70 - 13.00	10,307 - 11,377	0.25% of loan amount (max. upto Rs.15,000)
Indian Overseas Bank**	8.40 - 12.00	10,234 - 11,122	0.50% (Rs 500 - Rs 5,000)
ICICI Bank	9.10 onwards	10,403 onwards	Up to 2%
HDFC Bank	9.20 onwards	10,428 onwards	Up to 1% (Rs 3,500 - Rs 9,000)
Karnataka Bank	9.17-11.65	10,420 - 11,034	Up to 0.60% (Rs 2500 - Rs 11,000)
Federal Bank	9.00-9.50	10,379 - 10501	Rs 2,000 - Rs 4,500
Punjab and Sind Bank***	8.85 - 10.25	10,343 - 10,685	0.25% (Rs 1,000-Rs 15,000)
South Indian Bank	8.75 onwards	10,319 onwards	Rs. 1999
IDFC First Bank	9.99 onwards	10,621 onwards	Up to Rs 10,000
City Union Bank	14.45-14.95	11,751-11,882	1.25% (Min: Rs 750)

*0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holders.
**0.50% interest rate concession to borrowers with credit scores of 800 and above. Interest rate concession of 0.25% to borrowers having credit scores of 750-799.
***Concession of up to 50% on processing fee for PSB Apna Vahan Sugam.

Rates and charges as on February 12 **Source: Paisabazaar.com**

Managing rebalancing costs

THINKINVESTOR

Rebalancing is essential as you should cut your equity investments to reduce the risk of the market declining closer to the end of the time horizon of a life goal, hurting your goal but costs matter

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

Systematic investment plans (SIPs) make the process of investing in equity funds easy. You must, however, rebalance investments through time horizon for a life goal. Rebalancing involves costs. In this article, we discuss a process to reduce such costs.

Diverting SIP

Rebalancing goal-based portfolios typically involves selling some units in equity funds and investing proceeds in bank deposits. This cuts the risk of losing all unrealised gains in equity portfolio should the market decline.

Previously in this column, we suggested you can keep a threshold beyond which you could decide to annually rebalanceyour equity investments. The threshold can be determined as your expected pre-tax annual return on equity investments plus 1%. But selling units has associated costs. If equity investments are held for more than a year, you must pay long-term capital gains tax should capital gains exceed ₹1.25 lakh in a financial year.

Capital gains tax

If you sell investments held for less than one year, you must pay short-term capital gains tax of 20% and incur a penalty levied by the asset management company for redeeming units within one year from the date of investing. There is an alternative. Suppose you have ₹1 crore in your equity fund, a SIP of ₹30,000 and you expect 12% annual return. Further suppose you have 15% unrealised gains in your fund. Instead of selling units for ₹3 lakh (excess return of 3% on ₹1 crore), you can keep the unrealised gains and divert the intended equity SIP to a recurring deposit for 10 months. There are, however, some factors you must consider. One, your SIP in equity must always be for 12 months at a time so that you review and adjust the SIP for the coming year based on the rebalancing requirement. Two, your unrealised gains are at risk till the time you exhaust the diverted SIP amount. And three, you must restart the SIP on the equity fund after you complete the recurring deposit.

Conclusion

The SIP-diversion alternative is more involved than a rebalancing process. You may still have to sell units in your equity fund starting five years from the time horizon for a life goal. This is because you should cut your equity investments to reduce the risk that the market could decline closer to the end of the time horizon for a life goal and hurt your goal.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

WASHINGTON

Grok 3 chatbot from Musk-led start-up xAI to be unveiled today

REUTERS

Elon Musk said his startup xAI will release its Grok 3 chatbot on Monday and billed it as the "smartest AI on Earth" in a fiercely competitive market. Grok 3 was trained on synthetic data and is capable of reflecting on errors it makes by going over data in order to reach logical consistency. AFP

TAIPEI

Taiwan welcomes 'positive' words on U.S. govt. website about island

REUTERS

Taiwan praised the "positive and friendly" wording about the island on the U.S. State Department's updated website, which has removed the phrase that Washington does "not support Taiwan independence". The U.S. has long been Taiwan's most important backer, while risking the wrath of China. AFP

BUKAVU

M23 rebels reach the centre of eastern DRC's second major city

GETTY IMAGES

Rwanda-backed rebels reached the centre of eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo's second largest city, Bukavu, on Sunday morning and were present in most parts of the city after little resistance from government forces in an unprecedented expansion of their reach in their years-long fighting. AP

MOSCOW

Russians flock to visit Navalny's grave on his death anniversary

AP

At least 1,500 Russians came to the grave of Alexei Navalny in Moscow on Sunday, risking reprisals and braving freezing temperatures to pay their respects to the opposition leader on the first anniversary of his death in prison. Navalny was Vladimir Putin's main opponent whom Russia had declared an "extremist". AFP

Israeli strike kills three policemen in Gaza Strip

Agence France-Presse
GAZA CITY

Hamas said an Israeli strike on Sunday killed three police officers near the southern Gaza city of Rafah, a day after Israel and militants carried out a hostage-prisoner swap.

The Hamas-run Interior Ministry initially reported that two officers were killed and a third was critically wounded in a strike while they were deployed in the Al-Shouka area, east of Rafah in the Gaza Strip, to secure aid.

The third officer later succumbed to his wounds, the ministry said in an updated statement.

The Israeli military said in a statement that its air force struck "several armed individuals moving toward troops in the southern Gaza Strip".

Rubio leaves truce on shaky ground by calling for eradication of Hamas

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio says 'as long as it [Hamas] stands as a force that can govern, peace becomes impossible'; in a sign of the allies closing ranks, Israel said it received a shipment of 900 kilograms of MK-84 munitions from the U.S.

Associated Press
JERUSALEM

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Sunday fully endorsed Israel's war aims in the Gaza Strip, saying Hamas "must be eradicated" and throwing the future of the shaky ceasefire into further doubt.

Mr. Rubio met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem at the start of a regional tour, where he is likely to face pushback from Arab leaders over U.S. President Donald Trump's proposal to transfer the Palestinian population out of the Gaza Strip and redevelop it under U.S. ownership.

Popular sentiment: Protesters demand the immediate release of hostages held by Hamas in Tel Aviv on Saturday. AP

Mr. Netanyahu has welcomed the plan, and said he and Mr. Trump have a "common strategy" for Gaza's future.

Echoing Mr. Trump, he said "the gates of hell would be open" if Hamas does not release dozens of remaining hostages abducted in its October 7, 2023, attack that triggered the war.

Their remarks came just two weeks before the first phase of the ceasefire is set to end.

The second phase, in which Hamas is to release dozens of remaining hostages in exchange for more Palestinian prisoners, a lasting truce and the withdrawal of Israeli forces, has yet to be negotiated.

Mr. Rubio said Hamas "cannot continue as a military or government force."

"As long as it stands as a force that can govern or as a force that can administer or as a force that can threaten by use of violence, peace becomes impossible," Mr. Rubio said. "It must be eradicated."

Such language could complicate efforts to continue talks with Hamas, which, despite suffering heavy losses in the war, remains intact and in control of Gaza.

In another sign of the two allies closing ranks, Israel's Defense Ministry said it received a shipment of 2,000-pound (900-kilogram) MK-84 munitions from the United States.

The Biden administration had paused a shipment of such bombs last year over concerns about civilian casualties in Gaza.

Pressure Arab states

In a radio interview last week, Mr. Rubio indicated that Trump's proposal was in part aimed at pressuring Arab states to come up with their own postwar plan that would be acceptable to Israel, which says Hamas can have no role in Gaza.

He also appeared to suggest that Arab countries send in troops to combat Hamas.

European nations to meet in Paris today to discuss security

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Emmanuel Macron

France's President Emmanuel Macron will host leaders from key European countries on Monday to discuss the continent's security, Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said, amid growing concerns over U.S. efforts to end the Ukraine war.

U.S. President Donald Trump blindsided Ukraine and its European backers this week by starting discussions on Russia's invasion in a call with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin.

The new U.S. administration has also warned its NATO allies that Europe will no longer be its top security priority and it may shift forces as it switches focus to China.

"The President will bring together the main European countries tomorrow for discussions on European security," Mr. Barrot told the France Inter radio broadcaster on Sunday.

The meeting in Paris on Monday afternoon was to include Britain, Germany, Poland, Italy, Denmark and NATO chief Marc Rutte and EU chief Ursula von der Leyen, a European diplomatic source said.

Cook Islands signs agreement for closer relations with China

Agence France-Presse
WELLINGTON

Mark Brown

The Cook Islands says it has signed a deal to expand relations with China, stressing that the accord does not impinge on ties with former colonial power New Zealand.

Prime Minister Mark Brown said he signed an "action plan for the comprehensive strategic partnership" with Chinese Premier Li Qiang in the northern city of Harbin during a five-day state visit to China.

He promised to publish the accord, after New Zealand expressed concern about a lack of transparency over the trip and complained it had not been properly consulted.

The self-governing Cook Islands, a country of 17,000 people, has a "free association" relationship with New Zealand, which provides budgetary assistance as well as helping on foreign affairs and defence.

New Zealand Foreign Minister Winston Peters' spokesperson has complained of a lack of transparency over the trip, describing it as "a matter of significant concern".

24 Chinese military aircraft transit Taiwan Strait

Agence France-Presse
TAIPEI

Taiwan said it detected 24 Chinese military aircraft near the island on Sunday as a Canadian warship passed through the sensitive Taiwan Strait.

It was the first Canadian naval vessel to transit the waterway this year, Taiwan's Foreign Ministry said, and came days after two U.S. ships made the passage.

The U.S. and its allies pass through the 180-km Taiwan Strait to reinforce its status as an international waterway, angering China.Beijing has never ruled Taiwan, but it claims the democratic island as part of its territory and has threatened to bring it under its control by force.

Musk-led DOGE cuts $21 million India grant

Press Trust of India
NEW YORK

The U.S. Department of Government Efficiency led by billionaire Elon Musk has announced a series of expenditure cuts, including $21 million allocated for "voter turnout in India". The DOGE announced cancelling many programmes costing hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars.

Reacting to the post, senior BJP leader Amit Malviya termed the grant as 'external interference'. He claimed that the now cancelled programme was a pointer to the previous Congress-led UPA government enabling infiltration of Indian institutions by forces opposed to the country's interests.

One killed, five injured, in Austria stabbing incident

Associated Press
VIENNA

A 23-year-old man stabbed six passersby in southern Austria on Saturday in what police said was a random attack that left a 14-year-old dead and five others injured.

The suspect was detained in the city of Villach, where the attack took place, the police said. He is a Syrian national with legal residence in Austria, they said. Interior Minister Gerhard Karner called the incident an "Islamist attack with IS connections," and

The suspect is a Syrian national with legal residence in Austria, while the victim is a 14-year-old

added that the Syrian asylum seeker held was radicalised online "in a short space of time".

The Police spokesperson said a motive was not immediately known.

The victims were all men, with two seriously injured and two sustaining minor injuries, police said. Later on Saturday, police said a fifth person, also a man, was injured in the attack.

Peter Kaiser, the governor of the Austrian province of Carinthia, expressed his condolences to the family of the victim. "Those who live in Carinthia, in Austria, have to respect the law and adjust to our rules and values."

Far-right leader Herbert Kickl said on the X that he is "appalled by the horrific act in Villach" and wished the family of the 14-year-old victim who was killed in the attack "much strength."

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
O/o THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
(PROJECTS-WZ),GHMC, HYDERABAD

Tender Notice No.12/SE(P-WZ)/GHMC/2024-25/ **Date: 15-02-2025**

Item No.: 1; **Name of Work**: Construction of four lane composite steel girder bridge on pipe line road across Fox Sagar Surplus Nala under Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC)/Turnkey - Basis; **Est Cost**: Rs. 46 Crores; **Events & Date and Time**: **1.** Start date : 17-02-2025 from 03.00 PM; **2.** Last Date & Time for Receipts of Bids: 03-03-2025 upto 03.00 PM; **3.** Opening of Technical bid : 03-03-2025 after 04.00 PM; **4.** Opening of Price bid: 05-03-2025 after 04.00 PM; **Note: The Bidders are advised to visit www.tender.eprocurement.gov.in to download Bid Document and EPC project Tender Drawings. Any Queries can be addressed to sesrdppwz@gmail.com** Address of the officer concerned Sri .G. Sree Lakshmi, SE(P-WZ) Superintending Engineer (Projects-WZ), Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, Tank Bund Road, Hyderabad Further details can be seen at 'e' Procurement **https://tender.telangana.gov.in.** **Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Projects-WZ) GHMC**

DIPR R.O.No.10326-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2024-25 Dt. 15.02.2025

Kerala Maritime Board
(A Statutory Board of Govt. Of Kerala)

Expression of Interest (EOI)
For
Development of Ponnani Marine Park,
EOI Ref No. HOKMB-TVM/834/2024-C1 (Devp),
Dated: 17-02-2025

Due Date of Submission: 17-03-2025
EOI Consultation Meeting
Date: 28th February 2025 (12:00 PM -1:30 PM)

Ponnani Port Development:
Business Consultation Meeting
To facilitate dialogue between prospective investors about investment opportunities
Date: 28th February 2025 (10:00 AM -11:30 AM)

Scan to register

Email ID:
kmb.kerala@gmail.com
Ph No: 9544410029

Download EOI from
https://www.kmb.kerala.gov.in/en/tender

ODISHA LIFT IRRIGATION CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
Plot No. N-17/2, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751 012
Phone No.: (0674)2390195(Off), Fax No. (0674)2395844,
E-Mail ID: olicltd123@bsnl.in, olicltd@ymail.com http://odishalift.com

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

No. IT-16/2025-1329 /OLIC, Dated - 14.02.2025

The Managing Director, OLIC Ltd., Bhubaneswar invites online tender in percentage rate through e-procurement for installation, electrification, energisation & commissioning of Deep Borewells in Balangir district of Odisha state. Interested Bidders may visit website: **www.tendersodisha.gov.in** to view and download Detailed Tender Call Notice and bid documents. The bids should be submitted only online in the website **www.tendersodisha.gov.in.**

Important features of this NCB are as under:

A. Brief description of Work : Installation, electrification, energisation & commissioning of Deep Borewells in Balangir District (05 Packages)
B. Estimated cost of works : Varies from Rs. 930.35 Lakhs to Rs. 1566.51 Lakhs
C. Date and time of availability of bid document in the portal : From dt.19.02.2025 to dt.17.03.2025 (up to 17.00 Hours)
D. Last date/time for receipt of bid in the Portal - dt.17.03.2025 up to 17.00 Hours
E. Last date of seeking clarification - dt. 03.03.2025 up to 17.00 Hours
F. Technical Bid will be opened on - dt. 18.03.2025 at 11.00 Hours.

Any Addendum/ corrigendum/Cancellation of tender will be available in the said website.

Authority reserves the right to accept /reject any or all the tenders, increase or decrease the quantities of work put to bidding without assigning any reasons thereof.

MANAGING DIRECTOR, OLIC LTD, BHUBANESWAR

CAD-2588 OIPR-32135/11/0025/2425

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
49, East Wing, 4th & 5th Floor, Khanija Bhavan Race Course Road
Bengaluru – 560 001. Phone: 080-22265383
Website: www.kiadb.in email: Email: ceoem@kiadb.in

No. KIADB/COF/C-Audit/20099/2024-25 **Dated: 17.02.2025**

Short term Tender notification inviting bids for appointment of Auditors in KIADB for conducting Pre-Audit and Concurrent Audit.

The Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) invite proposals/offers through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from Chartered Accountant (CA) Firms/ Cost Accountants (CMA) Firms/Companies/ Associates/Institute of Public Auditors of India (IPAI) / Karnataka Institute of Public Auditors (KIPA) for appointment of Auditors in KIADB for conducting Pre Audit and Concurrent Audit of Head Office as well its unit/zonal offices for one year (F.Y 2025-26) to be extended on mutual consent and also on performance basis for another two years. The aspiring Chartered Accounts Firms/Cost Accountants Firms/Companies/Associates/Institute of Public Auditors of India (IPAI) /Karnataka Institute of Public Auditors (KIPA) who have not registered in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal should register before participating through the website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. The copies of the Tender documents can be downloaded from Karnataka Public Procurement Portal consisting of qualification criteria along with terms and conditions of contract to be complied with.

The bids shall to be uploaded through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only. Last date for submission of bids is on or before **03rd March 2025 up to 16.00 hrs.** For details, viz registration, e-payment, user manual for bid submission, visit Karnataka Public Procurement Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or contact e-procurement Help Desk No.080-46010000/ 080-68948777.

Sd/-
Controller of Finance, KIADB

DIPR/CP/5074/Zen/2024-25

DREAM DEBUT

DC's Shikha lauds teammate Niki's match-winning effort against MI

SPORTZPICS/WPL

Delhi Capitals' pacer Shikha Pandey was all praise for the match-winning knock against Mumbai Indians from the young Niki Prasad, making her WPL debut after leading India to victory in the recent U-19 Women's T20 World Cup. "This is really nice for Niki, playing her first high-intensity game and taking us closer (home)," said Shikha.

UTTER CONFUSION

Hesson criticises TV umpire's controversial run-out decisions

JIOHOTSTAR

Mike Hesson, ex-director of cricket at RCB, tweeted about the controversy regarding the run-out decisions in the WPL match between Delhi Capitals and Mumbai Indians. He wrote, "Not sure why the umpire decided that the zinger bails are not applicable? Have seen more confusion in last 10 minutes than ever before."

HARD TO UNDERSTAND

Mumbai Indians coach Edwards raises concern over umpiring

SPORTZPICS/WPL

Taking a dig at the run-out decisions that played a big role in her team's last-ball loss to Delhi Capitals, Mumbai Indians coach Charlotte Edwards said it was "really hard" to comprehend such calls. Three controversial run-out decisions by the third umpire sparked a debate over the interpretation of the LED stumps rules.

FRONTRUNNER

Arshdeep likely to be Shami's new-ball partner in CT

ANI

Harshit Rana is unlikely to feature in India's playing eleven in the Champions Trophy with Arshdeep Singh still considered way ahead in terms of talent and quality. The left-armer's ability to bring the ball back into the right-handers could tilt the scales in his favour and see him partner the new-ball with Mohammed Shami.

Gardner's all-round effort and Priya's spell turn the tide in Giants' favour

The latter claims three for 25 to restrict Warriorz to 143 for nine; the former leads the chase with a superb fifty to follow up her twin strikes

WPL

P.K. Ajith Kumar
VADODARA

Priya Mishra didn't get a game in last year's WPL. And when the leg-spinner finally made her debut for Gujarat Giants in the Season 3 opener against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, she went for plenty.

But on Sunday night, in front of a noisy home crowd, the 20-year-old showed her considerable skills. Bowling with impressive variations and admirable control, she broke the back of UP Warriorz batting at the BCA Stadium.

Priya, who was the last of the six Giants bowlers brought into the attack, took three for 25 to restrict the Warriorz to 143 for nine.

The home side chased down that modest total – lowest of the season by some distance – with six wickets and two overs to spare. Giants' reply was led by Ashleigh Gardner, the new captain who has been fantastic in every role she has been assigned.

The gifted Aussie smashed her second straight half-century (52, 32b, 5x4, 3x6) to take the game away from Warriorz, who had claimed two wickets in the first two overs.

Gardner and opener Laura Wolvaardt (22, 24b, 2x4, 1x6) put on 55 for the third wicket.

After the skipper was removed by fellow-Aussie Tahlia McGrath, Harleen Deol (34 not out, 30b, 4x4) and Deandra Dottin (33 not out, 18b, 3x4, 2x6) added 58 for their unfinished fifth wicket to take their side home. Earlier, it was a Priya show. In her second over, she removed McGrath and Grace Harris within a space of three balls.

When McGrath was given out lbw, she reviewed the decision, only to find that the ball had made contact with the bat only after hitting the pad. Priya then invited Harris for a slog-sweep and cleaned her up.

She also dismissed Warriorz's highest scorer, Deepti Sharma (39, 27b, 6x4). The new captain was batting superbly while wickets were falling around her, till she was brilliantly caught by Gardner, who timed her dive perfectly at mid-off.

The night would get even better for Gardner.

Beaten all ends up: Harris has no clue to this one from Priya. SPORTZPICS/WPL

SCOREBOARD

UP WARRIORZ
Kiran Navgire lbw b Dottin 15 *(8b, 3x4)*, Vrinda Dinesh b Gardner 6 *(8b, 1x4)*, Uma Chetry c Priya b Dottin 24 *(27b, 4x4)*, Deepti Sharma c Gardner b Priya 39 *(27b, 6x4)*, Tahlia McGrath lbw b Priya 0 *(2b)*, Grace Harris b Priya 4 *(2b, 1x4)*, Shweta Sehrawat b Gardner 16 *(18b, 1x4)*, Alana King (not out) 19 *(14b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Sophie Ecclestone b Kashvee 2 *(7b)*, Saima Thakor run out 15 *(7b, 3x4)*; Extras (w-3): 3; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 143.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-22 (Kiran, 1.6 overs), 2-22 (Vrinda, 2.4), 3-73 (Uma, 9.6), 4-74 (McGrath, 10.3), 5-78 (Harris, 10.5), 6-101 (Deepti, 14.5), 7-111 (Shweta, 15.6), 8-117 (Ecclestone, 17.5), 9-143 (Saima, 19.6).

GIANTS BOWLING
Sayali 2-0-20-0, Dottin 4-0-34-2, Gardner 4-0-39-2, Kashvee 4-0-15-1, Tanuja 2-0-10-0, Priya 4-0-25-3.

GUJARAT GIANTS
Laura Wolvaardt b Ecclestone 22 *(24b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Beth Mooney c McGrath b Harris 0 *(1b)*, D. Hemalatha b Ecclestone 0 *(3b)*, Ashleigh Gardner c Kiran b McGrath 52 *(32b, 5x4, 3x6)*, Harleen Deol (not out) 34 *(30b, 4x4)*, Deandra Dottin (not out) 33 *(18b, 3x4, 2x6)*; Extras (lb-1, w-2): 3; Total (for four wkts. in 18 overs): 144.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-1 (Mooney, 0.4), 2-2 (Hemalatha, 1.3), 3-57 (Wolvaardt, 8.3), 4-86 (Gardner, 11.5).

WARRIORZ BOWLING
Harris 1-0-1-1, Ecclestone 4-0-16-2, Kranti 2-0-15-0, Saima 1-0-20-0, Deepti 4-0-32-0, King 3-0-38-0, McGrath 3-0-21-1.

Toss: Giants.
Giants won by six wickets with two overs to spare.
Monday's match: Delhi Capitals vs Royal Challengers, 7.30 p.m.

DATE	TEAMS	VENUE	TIME
March 22	KKR vs RCB	Kolkata	7.30 p.m
March 23	SRH vs RR	Hyderabad	3.30 p.m.
March 23	CSK vs MI	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
March 24	DC vs LSG	Visakhapatnam	7.30 p.m.
March 25	GT vs PBKS	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
March 26	RR vs KKR	Guwahati	7.30 p.m.
March 27	SRH vs LSG	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
March 28	CSK vs RCB	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
March 29	GT vs MI	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
March 30	DC vs SRH	Visakhapatnam	3.30 p.m.
March 30	RR vs CSK	Guwahati	7.30 p.m.
March 31	MI vs KKR	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
April 1	LSG vs PBKS	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
April 2	RCB vs GT	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m
April 3	KKR vs SRH	Kolkata	7.30 p.m
April 4	LSG vs MI	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
April 5	CSK vs DC	Chennai	3.30 p.m.
April 5	PBKS vs RR	New Chandigarh	7.30 p.m.
April 6	KKR vs LSG	Kolkata	3.30 p.m.
April 6	SRH vs GT	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
April 7	MI vs RCB	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
April 8	PBKS vs CSK	New Chandigarh	7.30 p.m.
April 9	GT vs RR	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
April 10	RCB vs DC	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
April 11	CSK vs KKR	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
April 12	LSG vs GT	Lucknow	3.30 p.m.
April 12	SRH vs PBKS	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
April 13	RR vs RCB	Jaipur	3.30 p.m.
April 13	DC vs MI	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
April 14	LSG vs CSK	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
April 15	PBKS vs KKR	New Chandigarh	7.30 p.m.
April 16	DC vs RR	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
April 17	MI vs SRH	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
April 18	RCB vs PBKS	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
April 19	GT vs DC	Ahmedabad	3.30 p.m.
April 19	RR vs LSG	Jaipur	7.30 p.m.
April 20	PBKS vs RCB	New Chandigarh	3.30 p.m.
April 20	MI vs CSK	Mumbai	7.30 p.m
April 21	KKR vs GT	Kolkata	7.30 p.m
April 22	LSG vs DC	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
April 23	SRH vs MI	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
April 24	RCB vs RR	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m
April 25	CSK vs SRH	Chennai	7.30 p.m
April 26	KKR vs PBKS	Kolkata	7.30 p.m.
April 27	MI vs LSG	Mumbai	3.30 p.m.
April 27	DC vs RCB	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
April 28	RR vs GT	Jaipur	7.30 p.m.
April 29	DC vs KKR	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
April 30	CSK vs PBKS	Chennai	7.30 p.m
May 1	RR vs MI	Jaipur	7.30 p.m.
May 2	GT vs SRH	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
May 3	RCB vs CSK	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
May 4	KKR vs RR	Kolkata	3.30 p.m.
May 4	PBKS vs LSG	Dharamshala	7.30 p.m.
May 5	SRH vs DC	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
May 6	MI vs GT	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
May 7	KKR vs CSK	Kolkata	7.30 p.m.
May 8	PBKS vs DC	Dharamshala	7.30 p.m.
May 9	LSG vs RCB	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
May 10	SRH vs KKR	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
May 11	PBKS vs MI	Dharamshala	3.30 p.m.
May 11	DC vs GT	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
May 12	CSK vs RR	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
May 13	RCB vs SRH	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
May 14	GT vs LSG	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
May 15	MI vs DC	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
May 16	RR vs PBKS	Jaipur	7.30 p.m.
May 17	RCB vs KKR	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
May 18	GT vs CSK	Ahmedabad	3.30 p.m.
May 18	LSG vs SRH	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
PLAYOFFS			
May 20	Qualifier 1	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
May 21	Eliminator	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
May 23	Qualifier 2	Kolkata	7.30 p.m.
May 25	Final	Kolkata	7.30 p.m.

Champions Trophy: India starts training

Press Trust of India
DUBAI

A focused Mohammed Shami spent considerable time with bowling coach Morne Morkel as a full-strength Indian team started its training ahead of its Champions Trophy opener against Bangladesh on Sunday.

With the new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) strictly in place, there was no question of an optional session and right from skipper Rohit Sharma to the youngest Harshit Rana, the entire squad was present where Shami's routines were interesting.

Shami first tried to get a feel of the conditions by bowling a few deliveries with a short run-up. He looked gingerly in his initial strides.

Hardik Pandya and Shreyas Iyer were seen depositing Kuldeep Yadav and other spinners over the fence on multiple occasions. One such powerful hit from Pandya caused a minor but freakish accident as Rishabh Pant was hit on the knee. He was in pain but the physio Kamlesh Jain tended to him.

But it didn't turn out to be a serious issue as Pant padded up soon after.

Diaz ends goal drought as Liverpool moves seven points clear at the top

Scrappy strike: Diaz bundles in Liverpool's opener. REUTERS

Agence France-Presse
LIVERPOOL

Liverpool moved seven points clear at the top of the Premier League as Luis Diaz ended his goal drought to spark a tense 2-1 win against struggling Wolves on Sunday. Tottenham won the battle of the Premier League's underachievers 1-0 on Sunday to inflict another dismal result on Manchester United boss Ruben Amorim.

Atletico Madrid blew the chance to claim the lead in La Liga with a 1-1 home draw against Celta Vigo on Saturday, but played most of the game with 10 men after Pablo Barrios' red card.

The results: Premier League: Liverpool 2 (Diaz 15, Salah 37-pen) bt Wolves 1 (Cunha 67); Tottenham 1 (Maddison 13) bt Manchester United 0.

On Saturday: Premier League: Crystal Palace 1 (Mateta 47) lost to Everton 2 (Beto 42, Alcaraz 80).
LaLiga: Atletico Madrid 1 (Sorloth 81) drew with Celta Vigo 1 (Aspas 68-pen).
Serie A: Lazio 2 (Isaksen 6, Dia 87) drew with Napoli 2 (Raspadori 13, Marusic 64-og); AC Milan 1 (Gimenez 75) bt Verona 0.
Bundesliga: Bayer Leverkusen 0 drew with Bayern Munich 0.

Change of fortunes for Indian men, women go down in shootout

Uthra Ganesan
BHUBANESWAR

Fortunes were reversed as did the results as the Indian men earned their first FIH Pro League points with a 2-0 win against Spain while the women suffered a heartbreaking shootout loss to England at the Kalinga Stadium here on Sunday.

The Indian men made as many as five changes from the side that the started on Saturday, including Harmanpreet Singh, with Hardik Singh stepping in as the skipper. That decision meant a change in position and strategy for the entire team – Dilpreet Singh and Gurjant Singh sharpening the attack, Hardik stepping back to bolster the defence and Manpreet Singh shouldering his old responsibilities as the central midfielder.

The senior pro showed why he was so highly rated in that area, being the initiator for both the goals India scored.

After a barren first half that saw India taking its time to measure up the situation and Spain impressing with its probing forays up front, the host shifted gears post the break.

Manpreet, from right outside the dotted line, put Sukhjeet through inside the circle, who passed on to a diving unmarked Dilpreet on the left before Mandeep Singh's deft touch got India the opening goal in the 32nd minute.

Seven minutes later, Manpreet was again the creator, this time finding Gurjant inside the circle, followed by Mandeep and Dilpreet changing their roles for the latter to score.

The Indian team knowing it did not have its talismanic captain, changed its scoring plans and went for more open goals instead of repeatedly attempting to create penalty corners.

The Indian women, meanwhile, had to settle for one point, going down 2-1 in sudden death after being tied 2-2 in regulation time.

England, playing a lot more attacking game, took lead twice before India fought back through Navneet Kaur and debutant Rutuja Pisal.

Navneet then put India ahead in the shootout but no one managed to find the target thereafter while England matched up, failing to get past a resolute Savita Punia before Sophie Hamilton added to Lily Walker's goal to help it clinch a bonus point.

Giving it his all: Dilpreet comes up with an acrobatic effort. BISWARANJAN ROUT

The results:
Women: Spain 2 (Sofia Rogoski 5, Luciana Molina 38) bt Germany 1 (Aina Kresken 12).
India 2 (Navneet Kaur 53, Rutuja Pisal 57) drew with England 2 (Paige Gillott 40, Tessa Howard 56). England won 2-1 in shootout.
Men: India 2 (Mandeep Singh 32, Dilpreet Singh 39) bt Spain 0.

INBRIEF

East Bengal gets the better of Mohammedan SC

Kolkata: East Bengal FC scored a 3-1 win over Mohammedan SC in the ISL here on Sunday. Naorem Mahesh Singh put East Bengal ahead in the 27th minute. Saul Crespo doubled the lead in the 65th minute. Though Franca pulled one back three minutes later, David Lalhlansanga ensured three points for East Bengal with a strike in the 89th minute. East Bengal is in 11th spot with 21 points from 20 matches. Mohammedan SC remains at the bottom in the 13-team ISL with 11 points from 20 outings.

The result: Mohammedan SC 1 (Franca 68) lost to East Bengal 3 (Naorem Mahesh Singh 27, Saul Crespo 65, David Lalhlansanga 89).

Indonesia wins Asia mixed team badminton title

Indonesia took home its first gold at the Asia Mixed Team Badminton Championship on Sunday, defeating two-time defending champion China 3-1 at the Conson Sports Centre, Qingdao, China, on Sunday. Japan and Thailand, which had lost to China and Indonesia respectively in the semifinals, picked up bronze medals.

Di Basilico and Martina crowned champions

Francesco Di Basilico of Italy and Indonesia's Martina Ayu Pratiwi won the SDAT Triathlon Cup Triathlon in the Elite men's and women's category, in Chennai, on Sunday. "It is my first win in the international level," said the 20-year-old Italian. For Martina, too, this was her first win at the International level. "The weather was not a problem as it is the same in my country," the 21-year-old said.

The results: Elite: Men: 1. Francesco Di Basilico (Ita) **Total time:** 00:55.45 - **Swim:** 00:11.29, **Bike:** 00:28.41, **Run:** 00:14.24; 2. Takuto Oshima (Jpn) 00:55.54 - **Swim:** 00:11.22, **Bike:** 00:28.49, **Run:** 00:14.29; 3. Luke McCarron (Irl) 00:56.04 - **Swim:** 00: 11.18, **Bike:** 00:28.54, **Run:** 00:14.36. **Women:** 1. Martina Ayu Pratiwi (Ina) **Total time**: 01:04.25 - **Swim:** 00:12.35, **Bike:** 00:32.27, 3. **Run:** 00:18.06; 2. Minori Ikeno (Jpn) 01:04.50 - **Swim:** 00:12.31, **Bike:** 00:32.32, **Run:** 00:18.32; 3. Anna Zehnder (Sui) 1:04.53 - **Swim:** 00:14.05, **Bike:** 00:32.15, **Run:** 00:17.17.

LIVE TELECAST

Ranji Trophy (semifinals): day 1, JioHotstar, 9.30 a.m.
I-League: Sony Sports Ten 1 (SD & HD) & LIV, 7 p.m.
ISL: Sports 18-3 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.
WPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.
Serie A: gxr.world, 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)
LaLiga: gxr.world, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Middle-order heavy hitters in focus as Kerala takes on Gujarat

The visitor will look to Baby and Kunnummal to come good, while the host will hope that Jaymeet, Hingrajia and Umang continue their fine form

RANJI TROPHY

Anish Pathiyil
AHMEDABAD

Go-to men: Nizar and Azharudeen have been at the forefront of Kerala's run to the semifinals. VIJAY SONEJI

It will be a battle between the middle-order heavy lifters when Gujarat takes on Kerala in the first semifinal of the Ranji Trophy 2024-25 at the Narendra Modi Stadium here on Monday.

Both teams have banked on contributions from the mid-pack to bail them out of trouble through the premier domestic red-ball competition – their quarterfinal wins being an illustration.

While Gujarat's batters locked themselves on the crease to bat Saurashtra out of reckoning in Rajkot, Kerala needed a stubborn 256-ball association for the seventh wicket to earn a draw with a first-innings lead.

Salman Nizar and Mohammed Azharuddeen, the orchestrators of that match-winning partnership, are also the leading run-scorers for the southern side this season, with 555 and 424 runs respectively. The team will hope for more contributions from skipper Sachin Baby and experienced opener Rohan Kunnummal to ease the pressure on Nizar and Co. Baba Aparajith, who was brought in ahead of the season from neighbour Tamil Nadu, will continue to miss out following a calf injury sustained during the group stage encounter against Madhya Pradesh.

For the host, Jaymeet Patel has had a groundbreaking maiden season in First Class cricket, tallying 582 runs in eight matches, with two hundreds and four half-centuries. Manan Hingrajia and Umang Kumar also have flourished with the bat to counter the lean season encountered by veteran Priyank Panchal.

Spinners have called the shots for both teams in the bowling department. Siddharth Desai has scalped 35 wickets at an average of 23.40 for Gujarat, while Kerala's professional stars – Jalaj Saxena and Aditya Sarwate – have picked 60 wickets between them.

The Chintan Gaja-led side will hope to make the most of the home conditions to make its first final since 2016-17. As for Kerala, it has already equalled its best-ever performance in the tournament, but the focus will very much be on qualifying for the final and authoring a fresh page in its cricketing history.

Vidarbha has the edge at home against Mumbai

In good spirits: Mumbai star Suryakumar shares a light moment with Vidarbha's Karun and Wakhare. PTI

Amol Karhadkar
NAGPUR

Two titles and a runner-up finish in the last decade. And a knockout face-off for the second successive season. No wonder that Mumbai versus Maharashtra is passe. It's Mumbai vs Vidarbha that has emerged as the new Maharashtra Derby in the Ranji Trophy.

Akshay Wadkar's low-profile yet high on confidence Vidarbha takes on Ajinkya Rahane-led star-studded Mumbai in the semifinal starting on Monday at the Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium on the outskirts of the Orange City.

Vidarbha has enjoyed great success right through the season – before and after the limited-overs leg. Rahane admitted that host Vidarbha has a slight edge heading into the crucial tie, especially at Jamtha.

The black soil strip at the stadium – prepared by Abhijit Piprode's team under the watchful eyes of senior BCCI curator Taposh Chatterjee – is likely to hand an advantage to the team that bats big in the first innings.

Vidarbha will hope to stifle a shaky Mumbai top six despite the presence of Rahane and Suryakumar Yadav. With Yashasvi Jaiswal having been ruled out due to a mysterious ankle injury, an inconsistent Mumbai batting line-up remains fickle as ever.

If the Vidarbha bowlers, especially lead spinner Harsh Dubey, can account for the all-rounder trio of Shams Mulani, Shardul Thakur and Tanush Kotian – who have been Mumbai's saviours for most of the past two seasons – then the home team can hope to get one step closer to its third title.

Jaiswal's unavailability – he was released from the squad on Sunday – will mean Ayush Mhatre will get another opportunity. Having started the first half on an impressive note, the 17-year-old will be under pressure to come good in the big game.

Kyrian Jacquet cruises to his second Challenger title in two weeks

TENNIS

Kamesh Srinivasan
NEW DELHI

Big prize: Jacquet receiving the Delhi Open Challenger trophy from AITA president Anil Jain. KAMESH SRINIVASAN

Kyrian Jacquet did it again within a fortnight. The 23-year-old Frenchman enjoyed the Indian conditions as he won his second successive title, beating second-seeded Briton Billy Harris 6-4, 6-2 in the final of the Dafanews $100,000 Delhi Open Challenger tennis tournament at the DLTA Complex on Sunday.

It was a better fare than what he had executed in winning the Chennai Open Challenger last week, as Jacquet did not drop a set this week, in winning the fourth singles title of his career.

Jacquet was easily the better player as he was exquisitely mobile and played every stroke with purpose, retaining an intense approach right through the contest.

Dominant

He dominated the proceedings after getting off to a jump start with a 3-0 lead. He did seem to be gripped by a small spell of nerves, or perhaps indecisive play, as he failed to convert two set points on his serve in the ninth game. However, he sized the opportunity in the next game, converting the breakpoint.

Interestingly, Jacquet had dropped serve only six times in five matches and had broken serve 20 times.

The battle was on even keel in he second set till 2-2, but Jacquet wound up the proceedings swiftly, by not allowing Billy to convert two game points in the sixth game.

In fact, the Frenchman won the last four games to close the entertainment for the sparse gathering.

The champion won 75 ATP points and $14,200, while the runner-up pocketed 44 points and $8,330.

The president of the All India Tennis Association (AITA), Anil Jain, presented the trophy to the champion.

Jacquet and Harris along with the rest of the players will compete in the $160,000 Challenger next week in Pune.

SNAPSHOTS

Anisimova claims Qatar Open crown

Amanda Anisimova clinched the first WTA 1000 title of her career with a 6-4, 6-3 victory over Jelena Ostapenko in a rain-interrupted Qatar Open final in Doha on Saturday.

Kiplimo breaks 57-minute barrier for the half-marathon

Uganda's Jacob Kiplimo became the first person to break the 57-minute barrier for the half-marathon as he set a stunning new world record of 56 minutes 41 seconds in Barcelona on Sunday.

Ecstatic: Kiplimo's feat is the greatest single improvement on the men's world half marathon record. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The 24-year-old two-time world cross-country champion, who held the record between 2021 and 2024, reclaimed the record by slashing 49sec off the time of 57:30 set by Ethiopia's Yomif Kejelcha in Valencia in October.

It is the greatest single improvement on the men's world half marathon record.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

HAL FC posts win

HAL FC edged out Roots FC 2-1 in the BDFA Super Division football league here on Sunday.

The results: HAL FC 2 (Norbu Sherpa 11, Maximinus 90) bt Roots FC 1 (Madhialagan 31).

Jeeth Kalappa excels

Jeeth Kalappa's hat-trick helped Wildboar Hockey Club defeat Rangers HC 4-0 in the KSHA-BHA 'A' Division hockey league.

The results: Wildboar HC 4 (Jeeth Kalappa 23, 28, 34, G.S. Vivek 55) bt Rangers HC 0; Sandeep HC 4 (Royan Rodrigues 24, Poovanna 43, 59, Sundhar Raj 47) bt Royal HC 0.

One N Only should score an encore

HYDERABAD: The four-year-old gelding One N Only, who has won five races out of his six starts, should score an encore in the T. Chandrasekhar Reddy Memorial Cup, the main event of Monday's (Feb. 17) races here.

1 ONNU ONNU ONNU PLATE (DIV. II), 4-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 1.10 p.m.: 1. Knotty Senorita (1) P. Sai K 60.5, 2. Gloria (2) Kuldeep Jr. 60, 3. Glimmer Of Hope (3) Shivansh 56, 4. Dali's Champion (5) Abhay 55.5, 5. Flashing Memories (6) R.S. Jodha 54, 6. Total Control (7) P. Ajeeth K 53, 7. N R I Star (4) Kuldeep Sr. 51.5 and 8. Lego (8) H.M. Akshay 51.

1. GLIMMER OF HOPE, 2. KNOTTY SENORITA, 3. GLORIA

2 CHARON PLATE (1,600m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 1.45: 1. Beast Master (7) P. Sai K 56, 2. Corte Madera (8) Akshay K 56, 3. Gold Giver (2) P. Ajeeth K 56, 4. N R I Blaze (3) Kuldeep Sr. 56, 5. Real Thalaivaa (4) Mohit 56, 6. Pride Aside (5) Gaurav 54.5, 7. Screenshot (6) Md. Ismail 54.5 and 8. Whistledown (1) Ashad Asbar 54.5.

1. N R I BLAZE, 2. CORTE MADERA, 3. GOLD GIVER

3 MALVADO PLATE (DIV. I) (1,400m), 4-y-o and upward, rated upto 25 (Cat. III), 2.20: 1. Desert Sultan (5) B.R. Kumar 62, 2. Exponent (2) R.S. Jodha 62, 3. Master Touch (6) Mukesh 62, 4. Hoping Queen (3) Mohit 61.5, 5. Sadiya (7) Deepak 61.5, 6. Shubhrak (8) A.A. Vikrant 58.5, 7. Lucky Fiero (9) Abhay 57.5, 8. Silver Arrow (1) P. Sai K 57.5 and 9. Talking Stick (4) G. Naresh 57.

1. DESERT SULTAN, 2. SILVER ARROW, 3. SHUBHRAK

4 ONNU ONNU ONNU PLATE (DIV. I) (1,200m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.55: 1. Assured Success (9) Mukesh 60.5, 2. Vital Sign (4) Akshay K 60.5, 3. Silver Lining (3) Alex Rozario 57, 4. Elegant Lady (8) Rafique Sk. 55.5, 5. Golden Inzio (5) P. Sai K 54, 6. Always Special (6) Ashad Asbar 53, 7. Genie (7) Md. Ekram 53, 8. Noorian (1) H.M. Akshay 51.5 and 9. Splendour On Grass (2) G. Naresh 50.

1. VITAL SIGN, 2. ASSURED SUCCESS, 3. GENIE

5 MIR FAZILATH HUSSAIN MEMORIAL CUP (1,400m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 3.30: 1. King Best (2) P. Sai K 60, 2. Oliver's Mount (7) Mukesh 59, 3. Winning Attitude (5) Alex Rozario 58.5, 4. Star Forever (4) G. Naresh 57, 5. Sangreal (6) R.S. Bhati 54.5, 6. Emperors Charm (1) Akshay K 54, 7. Lifes Journey (8) Gaurav 52.5 and 8. Linda (3) Ashad Asbar 52.

1. EMPERORS CHARM, 2. STAR FOREVER, 3. KINGS BEST

6 POCHARAM PLATE (1,800m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 60 to 85 (Cat. II), 4.05: 1. Lucky Zone (3) Surya Prakash 60, 2. Brooklyn Beauty (2) Shivansh 57.5, 3. Fly Tothe Stars (4) Mukesh 53.5, 4. Hurricane Bay (5) Akshay K 53.5, 5. Anzio (1) P. Sai K 52.5 and 6. True Icon (6) P. Ajeeth K 52.

1. HURRICANE BAY, 2. BROOKLYN BEAUTY

7 T. CHANDRASEKHAR REDDY MEMORIAL CUP (1,200m), 4-y-o and upward, rated 80 and above (Cat. I), 4.40: 1. Black Onyx (1) Mukesh 60.5, 2. Last Wish (6) Ashad Asbar 59.5, 3. Proud Mary (3) Gaurav 56, 4. Miss Maya (5) Akshay K 55, 5. One N Only (7) Kuldeep Sr. 54.5, 6. Reigning Beauty (4) Alex Rozario 54.5 and 7. Encore (2) Md. Ekram 52.

1. ONE N ONLY, 2. PROUD MARY, 3. BLACK ONYX

8 MALVADO PLATE (DIV II) (1,400m), 4-y-o and upward, rated upto 25 (Cat. III), 5.15: 1. Battle On (5) P. Sai K 62, 2. Grey Sky (6) R.S. Jodha 62, 3. Politics (4) B. Nikhil 62, 4. Jim (3) Uday Kiran 61.5, 5. Secret Option (8) P. Ajeeth K 60.5, 6. Anahita (1) Santosh Raj 59, 7. Deccan Ranger (9) Deepak 57, 8. Tupac (7) R.S. Bhati 56 and 9. Zidane (2) Rafique Sk. 50.

1. POLITICS, 2. BATTLE ON, 3. SECRET OPTION

Day's Best: **ONE N ONLY**
Jackpot: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8.
Mini Jackpot: (i) 2, 3, 4 & 5, (ii) 5, 6, 7 & 8.
Treble: (i) 1, 2 & 3, (ii) 3, 4 & 5, (iii) 6,7 & 8.
Tanala: All races.

Northern Waves claims feature event

HYDERABAD: Trainer G. Shashikanth's filly Northern Waves, ridden by Mukesh Kumar, won the Deccan Bookmakers Welfare Association Alcock Arabian Million, the main attraction of Sunday's (Feb. 16) races. The winner is owned by Mr. V. Narendar Reddy. Mukesh Kumar stole the limelight by riding four winners on the day.

1. YADADRI PLATE (2,000M): BLACK DUST (Akshay Kumar) 1, Varaneek Gold (H.M. Akshay) 2, Take Breath (Mukesh) 3 and Skyward (Gaurav) 4. 3-1/2, Short Head and 7. 2m, 9.08s. ₹13 (w), 10, 15 and 16 (p). SHP: 80, THP: 53, SHW: 14 and 48, FP: 82, Q: 76, Tanala: 220. Favourite: Black Dust.

Owners: Mr. Rama Seshu Eyunni, The United Racing & Bloodstock Ltd, Mr. Harinath Reddy Teegala, Mr. Teegala Vijender Reddy & Mr. Teegala Sumant Reddy. Trainer: K.S.V. Prasad Raju.

2. SEA BIRD PLATE (1,100M): MISS SMILEY ANGEL (Mukesh Kumar) 1, Beverley (Akshay K) 2, Dubai Touch (P. Sai K) 3 and Dontblockmyway (Alex Rozario) 4. 1-1/4, Nose and 1-1/2. 1m, 6.75s. ₹49 (w), 17, 17 and 17 (p). SHP: 39, THP: 41, SHW: 25 and 30, FP: 215, Q: 110, Tanala: 886. Favourite: Double Bubble.

Owner: Mr. V. Narendar Reddy. Trainer: G. Shashikanth.

3. TELANGANA RACE HORSE OWNERS ASSOCIATION TROPHY (DIV. II) (1,200M): BURGUNDY BLACK (Mukesh Kumar) 1, Happy Soul (Kuldeep Jr.) 2, Calista Girl (Gaurav) 3 and Shadow Baby (P. Sai K) 4. 3, 3/4 and 2. 1m, 12.59s. ₹95 (w), 22, 13 and 11 (p). SHP: 28, THP: 38, SHW: 52 and 16, FP: 348, Q: 154, Tanala: 490. Favourite: Shadow Baby.

Owners: Mr. Rajeev Sharma & Mr. Rohit Gupta. Trainer: Magan Singh.

4. TELANGANA RACE HORSE OWNERS ASSOCIATION TROPHY (DIV. III) (1,200M): SHADOW FAX (B.R. Kumar) 1, Challenger (Md. Ekram) 2, Inderdhanush (P. Sai K) 3 and Lady Danger (Mukesh) 4. Neck, 2 and Short Head. 1m, 13.05s. ₹80 (w), 17, 11 and 21 (p). SHP: 37, THP: 53, SHW: 34 and 44, FP: 528, Q: 186, Tanala: 1,958. Favourite: Lady Danger.

Owners: Mr. G. Krishnamohan Rao, Mr. T. Nataraja Mehta & Mr. Mirza Ayub Baig. Trainer: D. Netto.

5. CHIEF JUSTICE TROPHY (1,600M): SUGAR (Akshay Kumar) 1, Just Incredible (Mukesh) 2, Clefairy (P. Sai K) 3 and Divine Destiny (Kuldeep Jr.) 4. 3/4, 1/2 and Neck. 1m, 40.45s. ₹14 (w), 10, 10 and 18 (p). SHP: 32, THP: 32, SHW: 13 and 16, FP: 44, Q: 24, Tanala: 82. Favourite: Sugar.

Owner: Mr. Y. Damodar. Trainer: R.H. Sequeira.

6. TELANGANA RACE HORSE OWNERS ASSOCIATION TROPHY (DIV. I) (1,200M): ROMANTIC GREY (Alex Rozario) 1, Leather Back (Rafique Sk.) 2, Rival (P. Sai K) 3 and Top In Class (Mukesh) 4. 1-1/4, Neck and 3-1/4. 1m, 12.26s. ₹36 (w), 10, 26 and 22 (p). SHP: 38, THP: 45, SHW: 11 and 25, FP: 266, Q: 131, Tanala: 651. Favourite: Leather Back.

Owner: Mr. Syed Mohiuddin Mufeed. Trainer: L. D' Silva.

7. DECCAN BOOKMAKERS WELFARE ASSOCIATION ALCOCK ARABIAN MILLION (GR. III) (1,400M): NORTHERN WAVES (Mukesh Kumar) 1, Cherie Chevalier (Akshay K) 2, Brilliant Lad (P. Sai K) 3 and Ayushman (Kuldeep Sr.) 4. 3/4, 7-1/4 and 1-1/4. 1m, 24.94s. ₹24 (w), 10 and 11 (p). SHP: 15, THP: 32, SHW: 30 and 10, FP: 39, Q: 22, Tanala: 127. Favourite: Cherie Chevalier.

Owner: Mr. V. Narendar Reddy. Trainer: G. Shashikanth.

8. DREAM GIRL PLATE (1,400M): COMING HOME (Mukesh Kumar) 1, Quality Warrior (Alex Rozario) 2, Exclusive Spark (Kuldeep Jr.) 3 and Char Ek Char (Mohit) 4. Not run: Fashion Icon. 6, 3 and Short Head. 1m, 25.77s. ₹34 (w), 19, 19 and 21 (p). SHP: 27, THP: 80, SHW: 18 and 19, FP: 243, Q: 93, Tanala: 3,210. Favourite: Coming Home.

Owners: Mr. Rajeev Sharma. Trainer: Magan Singh.

Jackpot: 70%: ₹7,705 (28 tkts.) & 30%: 383 (241 tkts.).

Mini Jackpot: (i) 6,145 (10 tkts.), (ii) 1,146 (71 tkts.).

Treble: (i) 616 (44 tkts), (ii) 1,364 (13 tkts), (iii) 707 (29 tkts.).